

THE APPEAL TO IMMEDIATE
EXPERIENCE



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THE APPEAL TO IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE



*Philosophic Method in Bradley
Whitehead and Dewey*

By ROBERT D. MACK

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To
My Father and Mother

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Introduction

IN the course of modern philosophic thought many men have sought a privileged starting-place for inquiry in some ultimate data assumed to be "given," from which it is hoped the subject-matter of philosophy, and of knowledge in general, can be derived or even constructed. They have tried to commence their philosophic reflection "at the very beginning" of experience, at a point free from all entangling alliances with any arbitrary or distorting work of thought, where no factors have as yet been added by thought to what is "immediately given." The search for and the inquiry into what is called "immediate experience" has been due in large part to this assumption that one must find such an "ultimate given," an "ultimate datum" for all knowledge. "Immediate experience" has been taken as the simplest kind of experience, the primary source and basis of all further reflective experience, and of all knowledge; to it many have looked to provide this "given," this starting-place or original of knowledge. It is to be noted that for most thinkers of this kind the origin of knowledge is also held to certify its validity; that is, knowledge is considered to be valid only as it can be shown to be grounded in and derived from what is immediately given.

This search for the "given" has led to the discovery of various "elements" which purport to fill the required rôle. Among the applicants have been 'sense data,' 'simple ideas,' 'impressions,' 'intuitions of the soul,' 'motion.' Thus, for example, Descartes searches his own soul for indubitable "ideas," and Hume seeks ultimate "impressions." For both, these ultimate data are taken to be cognitive: they are unshakable bits of knowledge. Down through the years we find men searching for a knowledge that is immediate, direct, and indubitably certain. This quest has characterized both rationalists and empiricists: for the former the search has led to alleged *a priori* insights into universal truths, or to propositions, both analytic and synthetic, that are "necessary"; whereas many of the latter have been led to assert the certainty of direct perception of the simplest truths of sense-experience.

Now there is another point of view for which the appeal to immediate experience is not the search for a "given" in this privileged sense. The search for such a "given" has in fact been consciously abandoned by many recent thinkers as a fruitless task. Furthermore, that men have not always found it necessary to institute such a search, that it had in fact an historical beginning, is made clear by the history of philosophy. The classic Greek tradition reveals that there is no need for holding the validity of knowledge to be dependent

on its foundation in immediate experience, intuition, sense-awareness, or perception. Nor does it take any of these alleged "data" as the "starting-place" for inquiry.

The modern "problem" of how knowing is possible would have been thought meaningless by Plato and Aristotle. For them, knowing is a fact with certain implications; tracing out these implications was one of their fundamental tasks. But in the course of time the peace of this intelligible order was disturbed in a curious manner. The growth of modern science greatly strengthened the assumption that "the universe is perfectly mechanical or machinelike, implying not only that it is governed by law but that we can explain everything about it by the laws of the science of mechanics, or any similarly limited number of physical principles or laws."¹ This assumption had, of course, flourished in one form or another since the days of Democritus, Epicurus, and Lucretius. In the seventeenth century we find Hobbes asserting that "that which is not body is no part of the universe," which is another way of saying that the world consists of nothing but matter in motion; and we find Descartes endowing his universe with two substances, body and mind (or extended and thinking substance), to which everything in the universe can be reduced, but which are themselves irreducible.

The stage was thus set for John Locke and his inquiry into the "original, extent, and certainty of human knowledge." Locke believed that the mind could know only its object and that this object is always an "idea." What we immediately experience is our own ideas; this immediate knowledge is the most certain knowledge. Here, then, are the ingredients for a "problem" of knowledge—a mind which can know only its own ideas, and a world forever screened from the mind by these very ideas. Man knows ideas directly, but nature only representatively; how then can we ever be certain that our knowledge is of the "real" world? Furthermore, in the terms in which Locke states what he is about, since the origin of knowledge provides the only test for its validity, he is led to search for the way ideas come into the mind. There is no need, within the scope of this essay, to develop the way Locke got into this problem through accepting Newton's assumption of a world consisting of corporeal particles with which "minds" have only a mechanical contact. What I have tried to suggest is how the appeal to a "given" in terms of immediate experience found its way into modern philosophy and how this appeal came to be bound up with the "problem" of knowledge.

In protest against this search for a "given" in immediate experience, there has developed a view which holds that the experienced world is the "starting-place" of all inquiry, and that the attempt to find a privileged "immediate experience" from which all knowledge must start is bound to end in futility.

According to this view the "data" for knowledge are habits, institutions, beliefs, and not sensations, which have no more and no less, to do with inquiry than any other mechanism on which the inquirer is dependent, for example, his digestion.

F. J. E. Woodbridge argues for this rejection of the search for an ultimate starting-point. He holds that inquiry cannot begin with sense-data, but must start rather with what we find; and what we find are "rocks and trees, seas and stars, memories and fancies." Woodbridge objects to the search for an ultimate "given" on the ground that it has led philosophers to try to abstract, to strip away, every shred of "interpretation" from the universe encountered in experience. In his own words,

For, in the first place, some interpretation has apparently laid hold of it [the Universe] before one is led to the attempt so to strip it. And in the second place, any stripping is inevitably fraught with the danger of being itself an interpretation of some sort. On this double difficulty one might dwell at length, for the search for what is called 'the immediate' has been long, laborious, and unconvincing.²

Woodbridge's objection to this search for the immediately given can be stated in another way; if we divorce subject-matter and interpretation, the result is to establish two disconnected universes, and we are left either with a mind that can know only itself or a world about which we can know nothing. George Santayana is voicing his objection to the search for an original "given" when he says: "a philosopher is compelled to follow the maxim of epic poets and to plunge *in medias res*."³ That is, any place can be a starting-place for inquiry so long as one does not attempt to start with the merely "immediately given"; the important thing will then be to find the implications of the place from which one starts.

Yet to protest against searching for a "given" that may serve as a privileged starting-place for inquiry, a "given" to be found in some bare and abstract "sense-data" or "simple ideas," is not to deny the existence of non-cognitive or immediate experience *to which* thought is related, *out of which* thought arises, and *in which* thought has a rôle to play. Nor does such a protest deny that there is an element of "brute fact" in all experience, that there is a world which is encountered. As Woodbridge says, one is always confronted with a world to be interpreted and with interpretations of that world. This element of brute fact is recognized in all philosophies and is involved in any appeal to experience, not only in empirical philosophies, but in the "latent empiricism" concealed in rationalist philosophies.

In illustration of the fact that men have not always felt the need to engage in the search for an "ultimate" given datum, we can turn to classic Greek philosophy. In the philosophy of Plato, for example, knowledge is not per-

ception, nor is its validity founded on perception; his *Theaetetus* pointed out with a certain finality that one can perceive clearly and distinctly and still not have knowledge at all. Similarly, in Aristotle's *De Anima* knowing is taken as the highest function of living things, while sensation and mere perception, though involved in knowledge, are placed on a subordinate level of the psyche's functioning.

For both Plato and Aristotle knowledge is not immediate but mediate and functional, an active process. In their analyses, *Noûs* or intellectual vision may be the culmination of knowing and may be dependent on knowledge, but it is the experience of "having knowledge" rather than knowledge itself. Knowledge, for them is an affair of ideas, and ideas are the intelligible expressions of things, the intelligible aspect which the mind grasps in understanding them. For Plato and Aristotle, it may be said that to know an idea is to know the "end" of something, to know a thing is to know what it is for and how to use it. This is brought out clearly in the *Cratylus*: you know a shuttle when you know what it is for, because a shuttle *is* what it is for. Similarly, Aristotle says in the *De Anima* that what a thing does makes it what it is; the "psyche" of an axe is cutting, and you know the axe when you know what it is for and what it does. These analogies of the shuttle and the axe are instructive illustrations for understanding the concept of knowledge in Plato and Aristotle.

Such a functional view, which when applied to knowledge itself involves determining what knowledge does, directs attention away from the origin of knowledge and toward its operation. If the object of knowledge is what things will do, its validity will depend on whether or not these things do what it is asserted they will do, and there is no need to inquire into the origin of knowledge in sensation or perception to determine its validity. On such a view you know something when you can demonstrate it in terms of principles, and the validity of your principles, as principles of demonstration, depends on whether they make the considered subject-matter intelligible; whether they are genuine "beginnings" or *archai*⁴ of understanding, and are the prior premises of demonstration. If, for example, you would understand an eclipse, you may start this particular inquiry by observing solar movements, but you understand only when, in terms of some organizing principle, you can say what and why the eclipse is; and this will involve the ability of your principles of science to predict. The principle's validity can then be established by whether or not it can fulfill its function of organizing and predicting. The establishment of principles is the outcome of reflective experience, not of observation alone; and they are the beginnings of demonstration, not of inquiry. For example, you may teach geometry by teaching axioms first, but you don't discover geometry by discovering axioms first—

they are conclusions of inquiry which come at the end of long reflective experience.

This same point is clearly expressed by Plato in the *Theaetetus*: the man who understands anything, say the sensation of heat, can predict this sensation's occurrence. Then this prediction will be verified in the occurrence and not by connecting knowledge with some particular origin.⁵

If, then, there is no need for a functional view of knowledge to search for a "given" to test its extent and certainty, the starting-place for inquiry becomes irrelevant to where inquiry gets. And so far as Plato was concerned, he was obviously willing to start anywhere. That he actually set out from the common-places of the Greek thought of his day bears witness to this fact. What was important for Plato was not where he started but where he got. Aristotle said that all inquiry started from what you already knew, and he would agree that where you start is irrelevant to where you get. In any event, historically men have always started from "the beliefs current in their own day or their own tradition," even when they have thought they were starting from the "very beginning."

If the notion of "immediate experience" is so heavily involved in this as well as other dubious philosophic enterprises, the question naturally arises as to its real function as a part of philosophic method and how it enters into reflective experience. Within the literature of contemporary philosophy the interest in immediate experience has been sustained. But in present-day thought this interest takes the form of a fresh and critical *appeal* to immediate experience. This new appeal stems in part from the conscious refusal to take immediate experience as a "privileged" ultimate datum for inquiry in the naïve Lockian fashion; it turns to immediate experience with a rather different aim in view. What then, precisely is the function of the appeal to immediate experience in contemporary philosophy?

Perhaps an answer to this question may be suggested by examining the appeals to immediate experience made by three "empirical philosophers," all well aware of the long search for a "given," all resolved to learn from this search, and all critical of a naïve appeal such as Locke's. These three men, Bradley, Whitehead, and Dewey, represent three contemporary views. They are all concerned with the same general problem, but they differ widely in the structure of their philosophic analyses; and by their differences they enable us to come from opposing angles at the common question of the function of an appeal to immediate experience. These philosophers will be discussed solely in terms of the ways in which they *illustrate* the appeal to immediate experience, and how their appeals play a part in their philosophies. My concern is not with any "final" results of their work, nor with their philosophies considered as systematic wholes.

The treatments of Bradley, Whitehead, and Dewey will be used to illustrate the general problem considered in the following chapters, namely: "What is the rôle of the appeal to immediate experience in philosophic method?" This problem may be broken up into these three questions:

- 1) What do philosophers think they are doing when they appeal to immediate experience, and does this always conform to what they are actually doing?
- 2) What is the difference between the immediate experience that is appealed to as part of a philosophic method and other distinguishable kinds of immediate experience?
- 3) What function does an appeal to immediate experience perform as part of a philosophic method?

It may be well to consider for a moment the more general question of what these men think philosophy is or is about, of what they are trying to do in their philosophizing, and how they agree and disagree on issues of fundamental importance. All three agree that one basic task of philosophy is to frame descriptive generalizations of experience.⁶ Dewey expresses this by saying that his metaphysics will be concerned with the generic traits of existence; Bradley by saying that his aim is in the direction of establishing general first principles (of the "Absolute," or "Absolute Experience"); Whitehead by saying that he would frame a system of general ideas to interpret experience. There is agreement, too, on the fact that there is more to experience than just thought, whether with Whitehead we call this something more "sense and emotion," with Bradley "feeling," or with Dewey "that which is 'had'." That is, all three are critics of experience taken as "cognitive" alone. All are trying to get a certain completeness, self-sufficiency, harmony, and coherence into what they say or into what they write.

This does not mean that at different times in their careers these men have not been concerned with different problems, nor that their points of view remained unchanged throughout their personal histories. For example, in *Appearance and Reality*, Bradley was involved in the search for an "Other" beyond the reach of thought—a supra-rational "Other" or an "Absolute Reality." But by the time the *Essays* and the second edition of the *Logic* were published this search, as such, had been abandoned, and its traces persist only in the view that all experience which falls into propositional form possesses the character of an abstraction, i.e., "the Absolute" now expresses the relativism within experience as a whole which permeates knowledge. Here we have as the very soul of the Absolute "its insistence and emphasis on an all-pervasive relativism." Whitehead's philosophy too manifests development. His central problem changes or at least becomes richer and more complex. In *The Principles of Natural Knowledge*, in his "philosophy of science," he is searching for the ultimate data of knowledge, and is attempting to

"ground" scientific concepts in immediate experience. In *Process and Reality*, in his "philosophy of organism," he is attempting to frame a system of general ideas in terms of which every element in our experience can be interpreted. This latter aim is similar to Dewey's search for the generic traits of existence and to Bradley's search for first principles—although Bradley is much less concerned with "science" throughout his writings, since he conceives of philosophy and science as fairly diverse enterprises.

Let me press this point. It might be said that each of these three men is trying to write as complete a book as he can about man's experience of the world. They agree that the criterion of a good book is its inclusiveness, and its freedom from self-contradiction. In these terms, and employing this metaphor, their differences can be quite clearly stated. Bradley is trying to get all of life into his book, he is even trying to express in it the inexpressible; whereas Dewey intends his volume to be a guide book for life, rather than to be life itself. And both Bradley and Whitehead seem to get involved in what is really the criterion for pictures rather than for books (i.e., in their conceptions of the rôle of immediate experience), when they examine and question the validity of what they write. A further disagreement as to the "starting-point" for philosophy can also be put in terms of this figure. Bradley would start his book by first setting down its final outline (the Absolute), in the form, say, of chapter headings; he would then set about filling in the chapters (convinced, I might add, that the book can never live up to the outline). Dewey is willing to start his book anywhere, without benefit of a set outline, and to follow the lead of the subject-matter. Whitehead's book seems to start not with a set outline like Bradley's, but with a carefully worked-out sketch of certain chapters as a model for the others to follow.

The following chapters will be devoted to answering the three questions already stated, in terms of the philosophies of Bradley, Whitehead, and Dewey. The conclusion will suggest that the function of the appeal to immediate experience in philosophic method is: a) to provide specific material for reflective experience, and b) to serve as a means of verifying inquiry and calling attention to what has been left out of previous inquiries into experience (what can be called a critical function). It will be shown that although the philosophies of Bradley, Whitehead, and Dewey are not always explicitly aware of these controlling functions of their appeal to immediate experience, they usually proceed in their appeals in such a way that *the appeals do actually perform those functions* although not always in agreement with their stated aim. The appeal to immediate experience is in all three part of the process of criticism which constitutes philosophy, bringing in factors left out of previous systems. In this sense a critical function does not mean getting back to what I have called a "privileged ultimate datum," it does not mean trying to wipe the slate clean; it means rather an attempt to state the various factors

involved in experience. Bradley, Whitehead, and Dewey believe themselves to be engaged in this sort of critical enterprise. How each became more or less entangled in the Lockian search for "ultimate data," particularly in his earlier writings, and how they all manage to clarify what they are doing in appealing to immediate experience and finally to work their way out of the search for a privileged datum and to push their philosophies, considered as critical enterprises, beyond the naïve quest for such a datum, will be the theme of the following chapters.

Bradley's Appeal To Immediate Experience

To understand Bradley's lifelong wrestling with the nature of "the given," it is important that we see what sort of problem led him to examine the traits of "immediate experience." In a broad sense it can be said that Bradley was concerned with combatting the atomism of the prevalent empiricism of the middle of the last century; but more specifically Bradley's point of view represents a reaction against the "intellectualism" of T. H. Green. Green himself had been trying to get away from some of the assumptions of the empiricism of men like James Mill and his son, such as its structureless world of pure particulars. I am not concerned here with a detailed tracing of this background, but a brief noting of some of the basic assumptions of Green and the empiricists may be of use—of use in that we shall then be able to see more clearly how Bradley's philosophy is a "critique of abstractions," an attempt to emphasize that which is non-cognitive in experience as against Green's concern with "thought" or structure, and to insist on the wholeness of "feeling" as against Mill's atomism.

James Mill conceived the world as an abode of pure particulars and, as such, structureless. In this world similars have really nothing in common. Man makes names as marks for the sensations and clusters of sensations that come to him. Group names are for convenience, giving a single mark for a cluster of sensations.¹ A conception is an idea or image of the sensation previously caused by some absent object, and there is really no difference between an idea, an image, and the cluster of sensations which is the object as we have it in sense-perception.² Thus James Mill was trying to reduce the world to nothing but particular sensations and their clusters. He managed, with some persistence and no little perversity, to read structure out of the world.

John Stuart Mill tried to qualify this "absolute particular" position. For example, he pointed out that the grouping of names is more than a mere matter of convenience, for without class names you couldn't say anything—they are necessary for communication.³ Combinations of particulars are organized by the principles of association for the purposes of language and communication.⁴ Here John Stuart Mill is beginning to bring structure back into the world, if only as found in language and as a contribution from outside, not as something found within it. Whatever structure there is in

the order of names, in the order of man's knowledge and language. It is important to note that the above remarks refer to just one part of Mill's analysis. Elsewhere he talks of "real kinds in nature." But in the end it seems quite clear that for Mill all we know is "experience"; and when he says "names are marks for things," he means, names are marks for sensations.⁵ As he says: "All we know of objects is the sensations they give us and the order of occurrence of these sensations."⁶ "The distinction we make between the properties of things and the sensations we receive from them must originate in the convenience of discourse."⁷ In this part of Mill's analysis the subject-matter of consciousness is simply the effect of the world on the mind, and names are ascribed to sensations caused by bodies on minds; both of the latter are unknown, for "body is . . . an unknown exciting cause of sensations, . . . mind is . . . an unknown . . . percipient of them."⁸

J. S. Mill's consideration of "real kinds" collides with this theory of experience. For in discussing kinds he points out that these conceptions must be of something there in the facts, and that real induction must go beyond description to a structure in nature.⁹ A true generalization must get at a universal structure and take you to unknown facts. This implies something about nature, that there are real classes, real kinds, to be found.¹⁰ How John Mill developed his philosophy is beyond the scope of this essay. What is relevant is that his advance over his father's position gave the idealists, including Green, an opportunity to extend the rather meager structure Mill had begun to admit into nature.

Green's reaction against the empiricism of the Mills led him in the direction of another great tradition, Platonism. In this tradition "knowledge" or "thought" is usually taken as identical with "being."¹¹ But here too I am not concerned with an exposition of Green's whole philosophy; I am interested only in that aspect which most influenced Bradley, and that is the emphasis on structure and its source in the mind. Green found that the empirical philosophies had left the world structureless and had reduced knowledge to mere passive sensations. Hence his own thought went in the direction of bringing structure back into the world from which it had become alienated. But the structure he brings in is identified with the structure of "mind," and is contributed by the mind. And Green argues that since mind is the source of all order in our experience, it is the "source" of all order among experienced things. In his disputes with the empiricists their language comes into his own thought, and he never gets away from the assumption that particular things, "sensations" or "feelings," are structureless, and hence unintelligible, without the work and contribution of "thought." So once more we find a world of pure particulars unknowable in themselves, but with this difference from James Mill's notion, that Green has "mind" impose a structure on them. Green commits himself to the view that "the

understanding which presents an order of nature to us is in principle one with an understanding which constitutes that order itself."¹²

This imputation of structure by the mind is what F. J. E. Woodbridge is objecting to when he insists that the "realm of being" is found to be characterized by a certain unity and coherence, and that we discover and do not invent logical connections in whatever we think about.¹³ Furthermore, he goes on, "behaving thoughtfully" implies something about the world's constitution—that it is "reasonable" or that there is a "reason" in things which renders their operations intelligible. That is, man's thinking is as valid a basis for inference as to the constitution of the world as conversely.

But for Green, in the last analysis, you cannot know particulars; you can know only thought and its relations. Thought is accessible to the human mind, "nature" is not. In this sense thought can know only itself, and the simplest experience becomes a product of thought with a logical structure coming from the mind. In the end Green is left with a dualism. On the one hand there are the objects of knowledge and "thought" which are real, and on the other hand the objects of "feeling" which are themselves apparently relegated to a realm of unintelligibility and appearance. For, as Green says, "feeling pure and simple . . . can . . . scarcely be accepted" (nor can "mere sensations") even as a warranted statement in regard to the mental history of the individual. Here Green rejects the notion of pure sensation as "an element in the world of knowable facts." In his own words, "mere sensation . . . is not a possible constituent in the realm of facts."¹⁴ That is, sensations depend on thought for being what they are. Their only being is to be "other" than thought, to be related to thought; and this "relation" like all other relations is itself the "work of thought."¹⁵ Particulars must somehow include relations to exist at all; percepts become intelligible only as they embody universals which thought bestows on them. So the objects of sense are always "becoming" objects of thought.

Green never gets rid of the need for a "source" for the structure of things, and he finds this source in the mind itself. Then, paradoxically, the reality of particulars lies in their being other than particulars, and Green is always losing his senses (i.e., particulars). The two fundamental contentions of Green are that "reality is a single, eternal, and all-inclusive system of relations, and that this system of relations is one in kind with that process of relating which constitutes our thinking."¹⁶ It is at the point where Green makes perception a perception of structure, of universals, that Bradley takes up his criticism.

If Green's philosophy is essentially a critique of the abstractions of empiricism, Bradley's is a critique of those of intellectualism. Bradley says: "Can thought, however complete, be the same as reality, the same altogether, I mean, and with no difference between them? This is a question to

which I could never give an affirmative reply."¹⁷ Another statement runs: "A lingering scruple still forbids us to believe that reality can ever be purely rational."¹⁸ From such passages it is obvious that Bradley is trying to get into his philosophy what Green left hanging with no intelligible status, and this is "feeling." As Forsyth says, "Bradley's view advances beyond Green's primarily in its emphatic refusal to abolish feeling in favor of knowledge."¹⁹ Or in Bradley's words, "one must not forget the regions of hope, desire and dream, madness and drunkenness and error, all 'unreal,' but all counting as elements in the total of reality."²⁰

The function of the appeal to immediate experience in Bradley's philosophy is in actual fact to criticize reflective experience for leaving out or distorting what is immediately given, and to serve as a means of determining the degree of adequacy of that reflective experience. As Bradley says: "My object is to have a world as comprehensive and consistent as possible, and, in order to attain this object I have not only to reflect but perpetually to have recourse to the materials of sense. I must go to this source both to verify the matter which is old and also to increase it by what is new."²¹ To the extent that this function is fulfilled Bradley's philosophy illustrates the general value of appealing to immediate experience.

But Bradley also considers that immediate experience provides an ultimate fact and a starting-point for all philosophic inquiry, to which thought must return as a "resting-place."²² That is, the features of immediate experience must be incorporated in thought if thought is not to remain incomplete but to become wholly valid. In immediate experience we come into direct contact with Reality, and that contact must be re-established *after* thought has done its analytic work, if thought is itself to express Reality with complete adequacy. Bradley thus becomes involved in a dialectic which makes it extremely difficult for him to say what he means. This dialectic enmeshes him in that "Absolute Experience" which has engendered the most scathing criticism of his philosophy; and also in the use of the "intellectualistic" criterion of non-contradiction (at least in *Appearance and Reality*) as the standard for determining the degrees of truth and reality. Keeping in mind the distinction between the way Bradley actually uses his appeal to immediate experience, and what he sometimes seems to think he is doing (i.e., discovering the "ultimate fact" from which thought in general arises) let us proceed to a closer examination of this appeal.

The notion of immediate experience undergoes important transformations in Bradley's writings. One trait, though, he never lost sight of; immediate experience is that "with which we start"—it is the level of experience where "subject and object are in no sense distinguished,"²³ and it is considered "as a fact and given." According to Bradley, "We have in feeling diversity and unity in one whole, a whole implicit and not yet broken up into terms

and relations. *This immediate union of the one and the many is an 'ultimate fact from which we start.'*"²⁴ When Bradley turns to immediate experience to furnish an ultimate starting-place for thought, he becomes involved in all the difficulties which beset such a search. And when he tries to recover this "starting-place" after thought has performed its analytic function, he becomes involved in the difficulties which beset any view that tries to "feel" the whole universe. That he is motivated by the desire to have immediate experience act as a unifying force in experience, and particularly philosophic experience, is quite clear. And, I suggest, in the degree to which knowledge must return once more to the same immediate experience from which it starts, this immediate experience functions neither as a source of additional material for reflective experience to incorporate, nor as a means of verifying the adequacy of that experience, but rather as the sort of ultimate privileged "given" of which Bradley's thought as a whole is essentially critical. But by the time his philosophy receives its full development in the *Essays*, the major use to which he puts the notion of immediate experience is as a means of getting diversity and variety into philosophic thought.

I have suggested above (see page 7) that the appeal to immediate experience has a rôle in any philosophy interested in taking account of experience in all its fullness and therefore in criticizing abstractions. This function is recognized by Bradley. In *Appearance and Reality*, speaking of "direct" experience (the forerunner of the "immediate experience" of the *Essays*) Bradley says: "the distinction and separation of subject and object is not original at all"—this distinction arises only in non-direct or reflective experience. Experience in its fullness includes thought, feeling, will, pleasure, pain—in short, all the manifold and varicolored threads of life itself. Let us, then, see what function is actually performed by Bradley's appeal to immediate experience, and how this appeal is sometimes differently construed by Bradley himself.

Bradley's "appeal" to immediate experience tries to include all the above-mentioned forms of non-cognitive experience in the make-up of the "real world." The real world is the world we experience; if there is something in experience which is not thought, these non-cognitive elements must belong to reality. The point to be noted is that for Bradley "reality is above thought,"²⁵ and that he "dissents from the corollary that nothing more than thought exists."²⁶ And this something more is "feeling," immediacy; thought develops out of it as interpretation, by making distinctions in language. And although Reality is not adequately expressed in language, it is accessible to language and to knowledge. Thus the real world is never identical with the intelligible world but it is never extraneous to it.

Bradley sees that the aim of knowledge is to give systematic expression to all areas of experience. And he does not neglect the fact that thought has

its setting in a wider experience, and that it is not the only way of getting into contact with the real world. Of course this does not mean that Bradley was not particularly impressed by the fact of "logos" or structure; but he saw that intelligible structure is not the whole of the real world but the world's "form"—logos is not the "matter" of the world; or, in Aristotelian terms, reality is "substance," not merely "form," as Green had held. There is structure in the world, but it must be the structure of something. Reality is more than thought, more than a logical system, because it is experienced in other ways than thinking (e.g., sensuously, intuitively, immediately). Thought, even where without doubt it exists, is "dependent and secondary."²⁷ Nevertheless, thought's dependence on immediate experience involves the notion that the validity of knowledge depends on an interpretation of *all* the facts and its including *all* experience. Thus one knows knowledge is valid by referring it back to the immediately experienced subject-matter from which it originated. The origin of knowledge is the test of its validity and certainty.

Thus in *Appearance and Reality* Bradley was not only led to seek in immediate experience those non-cognitive experiences which are the setting of thought, from which thought "takes its rise"; he was also convinced that thought departs from Reality to the degree in which it forsakes the immediate experience from which it starts. To understand Reality in terms of thought means to know everything; it means to *know* the world in its totality, to "comprehend the universe, not simply piecemeal or by fragments, but somehow as a whole."²⁸ And this in turn means to absorb into thought itself the non-cognitive immediate experience which is thought's setting—it means to know the world *as felt*. And Bradley's view of the nature of immediate experience makes its absorption into thought peculiarly difficult. For it is "an undifferentiated whole of feeling" that must be somehow recovered, a non-relational whole which is below the level of thought and which is the foundation for thought. In this sense, for him philosophy starts from immediate experience, and immediate experience is what is simply felt, or is felt simply. It is a simply felt whole in which differences are functionally present but not distinguished, and this is the indispensable background from which subject and object are derived. In *Appearance and Reality* at least, Bradley's use of the notion of an undifferentiated whole of feeling is as an ultimate "starting-point" for all reflective activity. Later on we shall see how an appeal to immediate experience can be made to throw particular light on a specific problem.²⁹

This immediate experience is "unstable," and breaks up into relations of subject and object—it is a manifold of sensation and feelings, and it "carries within itself the impulse towards its own transcendence." Thus the relational stage of experience or thought is seen as a necessary outgrowth

of immediate experience. But once Bradley arrives at this notion of relational experience or knowledge, he tries to get back into knowledge again the immediate experience it comes from. That is, knowledge is not complete until it gets back to where it started. In *Appearance and Reality*, as Bradley develops his notion of immediate experience, he finds that it is broken up in thought, and hence that it must be "transcended" until an "Absolute Experience" is reached. The progression from an "undifferentiated whole of feeling" to an "Absolute Experience" seems to illustrate Bradley's neglect of the fact that thought arises in specific and determinate situations and in connection with particular problems. And this neglect leads to a search for just such an "ultimate" starting-place and resting-place for all and any thought as Bradley discovers in what is "simply felt."

In other words, in contrast to a functional view of knowledge Bradley is seeking a resting-place or final goal for thought, as well as a starting-point, in the immediate experience of the unity or totality of Reality; this unity, he says, must be non-relational or immediate. The drive of thought to completion in an immediate unity reflects Bradley's attempt to get back to immediate experience as a place where thought can rest with certainty in its own validity. That is, Bradley finds it necessary here to attempt to return to the immediately experienced situation which thought distorts—thought cannot rest until it has hold of everything. It seems quite clear that this is what Bradley wishes to do, and this is not to overlook the perfectly commendable desire that Bradley has to achieve "satisfaction of the intellect"—another meaning he gives to "resting-place" in addition to the one outlined above. As Bradley puts it: "Truth is the object of thinking—and its end is to give a character to reality in which it can rest,"³⁰ or, in a later statement, "We have on one hand a demand, explicit or otherwise, for an object which is complete. On the other hand the object which fails to include immediate experience in its content is by the unrest of that experience condemned as defective. We are thus forced to the idea of an object containing the required element, and in this object we find at last . . . rest."³¹ Thought, then, must express that from which it starts, and there find its verification. For Bradley, the search for immediate experience is the search for Reality itself, for Reality as immediately felt.

There is at this point a striking peculiarity in Bradley's philosophy. He appeals to immediate experience in order to take account of that aspect of Reality which is not thought (this being the "anti-intellectualist element" in his philosophy), and yet he maintains that the "absolute criterion" for determining Reality is the logical principle of non-contradiction. The methodical use of this criterion brings back, and accounts for, the intellectualistic cast of his system—particularly in *Appearance and Reality*, and particularly in his notion of our knowledge of immediate experience. Brad-

ley expresses this criterion in these words: "Ultimate reality is such that it does not contradict itself: here is an absolute criterion. And it is proved by the fact that, either in endeavouring to deny it, or even in attempting to doubt it, we tacitly assume its validity."³² Bradley would have reality more than thought, yet thought must express the relation of itself to this larger whole. That is, reality is more than a logical system, yet any metaphysics, any knowledge of reality, must put into words in a logical way the intelligibility that is there. Thus metaphysical knowledge of the setting of thought and of truth must itself have an intellectual criterion. If Reality is more than thought and is more than truth, while nevertheless the criterion of reality is the criterion appropriate to thought and truth, then Bradley would seem to have a paradox on his hands. On the one hand he holds that his criterion is the logical test of non-contradiction, and on the other that it is the inclusion of feeling, of the immediacy of that felt subject-matter from which knowledge arises, a test which in the end becomes synonymous with comprehensiveness, harmony, all-inclusiveness.

Let us examine these two standards of Bradley and attempt to show the direction in which they move as Bradley's thought develops. We have noted Bradley's statement that ultimate reality is such that it does not contradict itself. Early in *Appearance and Reality* there is a clue to the meaning of this test: "Anything the meaning of which is inconsistent and unintelligible is appearance and not reality."³³ The object of the chapter on Relation and Quality in *Appearance and Reality* is, in Bradley's words, "to show that the very essence of these ideas is infected and contradicts itself."³⁴ And the same is true of the chapters on Space and Time, Motion and Change, Causation, Activity, Thing, and the Self. Bradley is at this point referring specifically to logical non-contradiction. "The contradiction or contrariety essential to the relational situation is likewise found in space and time, motion and change, causation, activity, and the self. Nowhere in appearance do we find a relational situation, whatever its character, that is altogether self-coherent." If the meaning of non-contradiction is not already clear, at this point we find Bradley saying that "if you think at all so as to discriminate between truth and falsehood, you will find you cannot accept open self-contradiction. Hence to think is to judge, and to judge is to criticize, and to criticize is to use a criterion of reality."³⁵ "The standard (it is agreed) both exists and possesses a positive character, and it is agreed that this character rejects inconsistency . . . Our standard denies inconsistency, and therefore asserts consistency."³⁶

Commenting on the intellectualism of Bradley's early work, Rudolf Kagey points out that:

The strictly logical character of non-contradiction was acceptable so long

as we limited ourselves to noetic experience . . . The moment, however, that we extend our view of reality to include in addition to a world that is known, a world that is possessed in parti-coloured experience, something has happened to throw doubt on our original absolute criterion. It is not difficult to resume Zeno's paradoxes, or establish Kant's antinomies, . . . it is comparatively easy to show that such conceptions as Time, Space, Motion, Activity, Self, involve intellectual lacunae which indicate latent self-contradictions, and on this to reject them as unreal given the original 'absolute criterion.'³⁷

Turning to the second part of Bradley's double standard in which the criterion takes on the character of inclusiveness, we find Bradley saying: "The criterion of truth is comprehensiveness," and: "The criterion of truth is likewise the criterion of degrees of Reality;" or

The test which I advocate is the idea of a whole of knowledge as wide and as consistent as may be. In speaking of system I mean always the union of these two aspects, and this is the sense and the only sense in which I am defending coherence. If we separate coherence from . . . comprehensiveness, then I agree that neither of these aspects of system will work by itself . . . All that I can do here is to point out that both of the above aspects are for me inseparably included in the idea of system, and that coherence apart from comprehensiveness is not for me the test of truth or reality.³⁸

In this connection it is interesting to note Kagey's statement that here the criterion of non-contradiction changes its original meaning of "unacceptable to the intellect" to "incompleteness," without Bradley's making clear that he is using the old word in a new sense. "To this extent then, self-contradiction is the satisfaction of thought; but this self-contradiction amounts to no more in the long run than a fitting humility in the face of experience as a whole."³⁹ And referring to Bradley's sentence "The object . . . in the end is found to be self-contradictory or harmonious," Kagey writes: "Here is the final breakdown of the early intellectualist criterion. To be self-contradictory implies more than that the object is out of harmony with itself . . . In brief the criterion has been metamorphosed from 'non-contradiction' to 'satisfaction,' felt satisfaction."⁴⁰ And Bradley clearly seems to be making such a shift when he writes: "The relation of immediate experience to its felt contents . . . must be taken simply as a fact . . . Our attempt (to describe it) is justified so far as the description seems true, that is, although inadequate, it does not positively jar, and again is felt positively to agree with our felt experience";⁴¹ or "Perfect truth . . . must realize the idea of a systematic

whole . . . And such a whole, we saw, possessed the two characters of coherence and comprehensiveness."⁴²

For the most part the above references are from the *Essays*, but there are many indications in *Appearance and Reality* of what was to come. There, for instance, Bradley writes:

Truth must exhibit the mark of internal harmony, or, again, the mark of expansion and all-inclusiveness . . . That which contradicts itself, in the first place, jars, because the whole, immanent within it, drives its parts into collision. And the way to find harmony, as we have seen, is to re-distribute these discrepancies in a wider arrangement. But in the second place, harmony is incompatible with restriction and finitude. For that which is not all-inclusive must by virtue of its essence internally disagree . . . ⁴³

Also in *Appearance and Reality* we find Bradley saying: "The character of the real is to possess everything in a harmonious form":⁴⁴ "A judgment that is more comprehensively self-coherent than not is properly called true";⁴⁵ and "The degree to which a system is self-coherent is held to be the extent to which it is comprehensive."⁴⁶

Bradley's double standard or dual criterion, then, tends to reduce to the single standard of comprehensiveness or all-inclusiveness. By identifying his two criteria he arrives at a reduction which leaves him with no real logical criterion: knowing is reduced to feeling. From a different point of view R. W. Church is, in effect, criticizing what might be called Bradley's failure at times to be intellectualist enough when he says: "wherever Bradley writes of a relational situation as being self-contradictory he means not what any reader steeped in the Aristotelian tradition would erroneously take him to mean, rather, he means that the terms in question are respectively contraries, and that by virtue of these contraries the relational situation is *self-discrepant*."⁴⁷ Church also points to what he considers the non-intellectualism of Bradley's view that only relational identity and not absolute identity is possible, saying: "It would seem to be fairly clear that no *rational ground* for a choice between these disjuncts [absolute and relational identity] can be demonstrated *a priori* . . . He [Bradley] denounces the laws of thought as tautologies; upon the assumption that to be a tautology is to be inane; and proceeds to identify the contradictory with the contrary. *Yet this is done without benefit of either logic or dialectic*."⁴⁸ Furthermore Church takes exception to what he feels is Bradley's ungrounded insistence that the relational is taken up into a higher unity in which the self-discrepancies of appearance are fully resolved and thus healed. And by way of a finishing touch Church objects that Bradley's criterion of inclusiveness or harmony is no criterion at all since "this standard is [not] anything distinguishable from the very

degrees of truth and reality themselves of which that standard is the criterion." "Degrees of coherence may be an index of degrees of satisfaction [of the intellect]. But if the coherence theory about the nature of truth is to afford a criterion of degrees of truth, what we need is an index of degrees of coherence. And that we do not and cannot have, short of the unavailable Absolute."⁴⁹ Kagey makes the same criticism of a lack of "intellectualism" when he takes Bradley to task for not making explicit the change from the criterion of "unacceptability to the intellect" to that of "incompleteness."

Thus we see that in the end Bradley's criterion of truth and reality is comprehensiveness. Later we shall have occasion to criticize what seems to be Bradley's attempt to get all of experience into knowledge—and to get back to the immediate experience from which he starts in order that thought may avoid falling prey to self-contradiction. But there is no doubt that, whatever Bradley has in mind, he actually did appeal to immediate experience to throw light on specific problems which lay in the way of his achieving the degree of comprehensiveness for which he searched. There are so many examples of this appeal in Bradley's writings that a choice of illustrations must be somewhat arbitrary. As good a place to start as any for the purpose seems to me to be Bradley's analysis of the meanings and reality of "self."

In the elucidation of the meanings of "self" (*Appearance and Reality*, Chapter IX) Bradley asks these questions, "Is the self real, is it anything which we can predicate of reality? Or is it, on the other hand, like all the preceding, a mere appearance—something which is given, and, in a sense, most certainly exists, but which is too full of contradictions to be the genuine fact?" And his answer, of course, is "I have been forced to embrace the latter conclusion."⁵⁰ The first thing to note is that Bradley talks of the self in terms of a "given," and given, presumably, in immediate experience. A little further on he makes this explicit when he says: "There seems, however, no doubt that the inner core of feeling, resting mainly on what is called Coenesthesia, is the foundation of the self,"⁵¹ and: "Every soul either exists or has existed at a stage, where there was no self and no not-self, neither Ego nor object in any sense whatever."⁵² That is, thought and will emerge from a basic "whole of feeling given without relation," in short from immediate experience.

The following passage from *Appearance and Reality* is long, but as an illustration of Bradley's appeal to immediate experience it is so admirably suited to my purpose that I quote it at length:

The self and not-self, as discoverable, are concrete groups, and the question is as to the content of these. What is that content, if any, which is essentially not-self or self? Perhaps the best way of beginning this inquiry is to ask whether there is *anything* which may not become an object and, in that sense, a not-self. We certainly seem able to set everything over

against ourselves. We begin from the outside, but the distinguishing process becomes more inward, until it ends with deliberate and conscious introspection. Here we attempt to set before, and so opposite to, self our most intimate features. We cannot do this with all at any one time, but with practice and labour one detail after another is detached from the felt background and brought before our view . . . And I think, we must accept the result that, if not everything may become at times a practical not-self, it is at least hard to find exceptions.

Let us now . . . ask if the not-self contains anything which belongs to it exclusively. It will not be easy to discover many such elements. In the theoretical relation it is quite clear that not everything can be an object, all together and at once. At any one moment that which is in any sense before me must be limited. What are we to say then becomes of that remainder of the not-self which clearly has not, even for the time, passed wholly from my mind? . . . I refer to the features which have now sunk below this level. These are not even a setting or a fringe to the object of my mind. They have passed lower into the general background of feeling, from which that distinct object with its indistinct setting is detached. But this means that for the time they have passed into the self.⁵³

And in a footnote, referring to the "extreme limit of the interchange of content between the not-self and the self," Bradley says: "The main point lies in our ability to feel a discrepancy between our felt self and any object before it. This, reflected on and made an object as, of course, in its main vague type is always possible with past feeling—gives us the idea of an un-reduced residue. The same ability to feel discrepancy is the ground of our belief as to difference or identity between past and present feeling."⁵⁴

To conclude this illustration of the appeal to immediate experience as a means of clarifying and criticizing the reality of self, I chose a passage which is peculiarly apt since it presages the doctrine of the famous essay on "Our Knowledge of Immediate Experience" which appears as Chapter 11 of the *Essays*. Bradley writes:

How, I may be asked, if self-consciousness is no more than you say, do we take one object as self and another as not-self? Why is the observed object perceived at all in the character of self? This is a question, I think, not difficult to answer, so far at least as is required for our purpose here. The all-important point is this, that the unity of feeling never disappears. The mass, at first undifferentiated, groups itself into objects in relation to me; and then again further the 'me' becomes explicit; and itself is an object in relation to the background of feeling. But, none the less, the object not-self is still a part of the individual soul, and the object self likewise keeps its place in this felt unity. The distinctions have supervened

upon, but they have not divided, the original whole; and, if they had done so, the result would have been mere destruction. Hence, in self-consciousness, those contents perceived as the self belong still to the whole individual mass. They, in the first place, are features in the felt totality; then again they are elements in that inner group from which the not-self is distinguished; and finally they become an object opposed to the internal background.⁵⁵

Turning to another instance of the appeal to immediate experience as a way of clarifying specific problems, we find that in elucidating the meaning of Reality as the self-consistent, Bradley goes on to say that Reality is "sentient experience," and he again has recourse to immediate experience in the following manner:

For if, seeking for reality, we go to experience, what we certainly do not find is a subject or an object, or indeed any other thing whatever, standing separate and on its own bottom. What we discover rather is a whole in which distinctions can be made, but in which divisions do not exist. And this is the point on which I insist, and it is the very ground on which I stand, when, I urge that reality is sentient experience.⁵⁶

As Bradley explicitly says, one of the two sources of our imperfect knowledge of Reality is "mere feeling or immediate presentation" (the other is the relational character of process).⁵⁷ "For all our knowledge arises in the first place from the 'this' [immediate experience]. It is the one source of our experience and every element of the world must submit to pass through it. . . . Every 'this' still shows a passing aspect of undivided singleness. In the mental background especially such a fused unity remains a constant factor, and can never be dissipated. And it is such an unbroken wholeness which gives the sense of individual reality."⁵⁸ So once again we find Bradley appealing to immediate experience as a clue to Reality, and as a way of criticizing and defining it.

To analyze Bradley's discussion of solipsism fully is beyond the scope of this essay; but in connection with what has gone before, it should be noted that in criticizing solipsism Bradley points out that the very notion of immediate experience prevents one from identifying reality with the present moment, since:

To remain within the presented is neither defensible nor possible. We are compelled alike by necessity and by logic to transcend it . . . Now in answer, I admit that to find reality we must betake ourselves to feeling. It is the real, which there appears, which is the subject of all predicates . . . [but] I deny that the felt reality is shut up and confined within *my* feeling. For the latter may, by addition, be extended beyond its own proper

limits . . . There may be a further experience immediate and direct, something that *is* my private feeling, and *also* much more.⁵⁹

Talking of Ward's reduction of experience to consciousness, Bradley says, "But is it necessary to identify experience and consciousness? Here is a question which seems worth some consideration." And his answer takes, once more, the form of an appeal to immediate experience—he says:

Now consciousness, to my mind, is not original. What comes first in each of us is rather feeling, a state as yet without either an object or subject. . . . Feeling is immediate experience without distinction or relation in itself. It is a unity, complex but without relations. And there is here no difference between the state and its contents, since, in a word, the experienced and the experience are one. And a distinction between cognition and other aspects of our nature is not yet developed . . . And on this felt background depends the unity and continuity of our lives, lost hopelessly by Associationism, and lost no less hopelessly by the identification of experience with consciousness . . . An experienced relation seems to involve an experienced whole, but this whole is at once supplied by feeling. For consciousness is superinduced on, and is still supported by, feeling; and feeling is itself an experienced whole.⁶⁰

The problem of relations can serve as a final illustration of the function of Bradley's appeal. Talking of substantives and adjectives Bradley writes:

The immediate unity, in which facts come to us, has been broken up by experience, and later by reflection. The thing with its adjectives is a device for enjoying at once both variety and concord. But the distinctions, once made, fall apart from the thing, and away from one another. And our attempt to understand their relations brought us round merely to a unity, which confesses itself a pretense, or else falls back upon the old undivided substance, which admits of no relations. We shall see the hopelessness of its dilemma more clearly when we have examined how relation stands to quality.⁶¹

And when he tries to clarify relations themselves (and the relational character of process) we find them firmly grounded in immediate experience. As R. W. Church points out, "Qualities as qualities are moments of immediacy in sentient process. And relations are the moments of differentiation in that process."⁶² And Bradley criticizes both external and internal relations by contrasting them with immediate experience. Concerning the former Bradley says, "A scheme of external relations in the first place is confronted by the apparent fact of feeling with its immediate unity of a non-relational manifold. To attempt to deny this fact, or again to leave it somewhere out-

side, seems ruinous; but how on the other hand it is to be included in the scheme I do not know."⁶³ And concerning internal relations: "Criticism therefore which assumes me committed to the ultimate truth of internal relations, all or any of them, is based on a mistake. I cannot accept, for instance, the relation of subject and predicate as an adequate expression of reality. It evidently fails to carry over consistently into a higher region the felt sensible unity of the one and many."⁶⁴ And finally in this connection, to sum up what Bradley is doing in appealing to immediate experience we can use his own words, "Relations, we saw, are a development of and from the felt totality. They inadequately express, and they still imply in the background that unity apart from which the diversity is nothing. Relations are unmeaning except within and on the basis of a substantial whole, and related terms, if made absolute, are forthwith destroyed. Plurality and relatedness are but features and aspects of a unity."⁶⁵

The basic drive in Bradley's philosophy is to attain perfect knowledge, or if attainment is humanly impossible, at least to tell what this perfection would be like. In his own words: "if the main tendencies of our nature do not reach consummation in the Absolute, we cannot believe that we have attained to perfection and truth,"⁶⁶ and "to be deficient in either of these aspects [inclusiveness and harmony] is to fall short of perfection."⁶⁷ Another way of stating this is that despite Bradley's conceived end, he cannot help trying to get all of life into knowledge and to *know* what the larger experience is which thought distorts. In this sense his appeal to immediate experience becomes the attempt to recover this immediate experience as an object of thought, both as a resting-place for thought and as a test for thought's validity; for not to include immediate experience in thought is to make thought a prey to self-contradiction. It is the attempt of knowledge to get back somehow to objects as they are before they are known, for as Bradley says, "thought must include immediate experience even if to do so transforms its character." "*It has then to become one thing with sense and feeling.*"⁶⁸ Later on Bradley makes this point even more emphatic, if possible, by saying that, "truth itself would not be complete, until it took in and included all aspects of the universe."⁶⁹ Is this not the natural consequence of trying to get all of life into knowledge? That is, by failing to preserve the distinction between "knowing" and "having" an experience, Bradley would seem to want to know everything he feels and to feel everything he knows, to bring feeling under the same criterion as knowing.

We have seen also that Bradley is trying to *know* what the larger experience is in which thought arises. Now if you have to experience this larger whole as something known, then "having" an experience seems to become identical with "knowing" the experience. As J. H. Muirhead says, "Bradley's view is . . . the ideal or claim of truth is that our thought should not only correspond

with reality as from the outside but should take possession of and be taken possession of by reality. In 'truth' we are to have the very thing, all the thing, and nothing but the thing."⁷⁰ Muirhead may very well have gotten his opinion from Bradley's statement that the content of immediate experience may show mediating (Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 177).

That one can talk intelligibly *about* immediate experience is not here being questioned. But what Bradley seems to want is to be able to get the immediate qualities of experience itself into discourse, like trying to convey to a blind man in words the very experience itself of the color "blue." If one were to look for a label to mark this sort of procedure, it might be convenient to call it Bradley's attempt to get all of immediate experience into reflective experience; as we shall see, the opposite procedure of trying to get all of reflective experience into immediate experience is characteristic of Whitehead. In contrast to a position like that of the classic Greek tradition, where knowledge is of the intelligible aspect of things, Bradley would have knowledge of the experienced world in its totality, of "what is beyond the visible world," of a "whole in which distinctions can be made, but in which divisions do not exist"; and this totality, this whole of experience, is the Absolute.

What Bradley wants to know is absolute truth about the Absolute; and Reality, or the Absolute, includes everything. In Bradley's words, "There can be no outside, because already what is inside is everything."⁷¹ And some truths must be certain, for example, such a truth as that Reality is one. Even the "subordinate" truths are all liable to an intellectual criterion. They are relatively true the more nearly they approach perfection; as Bradley says, "It is this perfection which is our measure. Our criterion is—the idea of a complete system."⁷² On this criterion truth would be defined in terms of its inclusion of *all* experience, and this necessitates reference to immediate experience as the origin and starting-place of thought, to the confounding of both immediate experience and thought, in the sense that all of experience is thus forced under the criterion for knowledge.

Bradley's realization of the limitations of thought drives him to "feeling," while his appeal to immediate experience as the starting-place for thought and as the "one road to the solution of ultimate problems" forces him to try to know feeling or immediate experience in the way reflective experience is known, and to try to get all of life into the reality whose criterion is, after all, the standard of non-contradiction. Thus we find him saying,

Thought always is found with, and appears to demand, another. Now the question is whether this leads to self-contradiction. If thought asserted the existence of any content which was not an actual or possible object of thought—certainly that assertion in my judgment would contradict

itself. But the Other which I maintain, is not any such content, nor is it another separated "what" [i.e. another 'ideal content' or 'thought,' as distinguished from the "that," Bradley's synonym for "existence"], nor in any case do I suggest that it lies outside intelligence.⁷³

T. M. Forsyth sums this up by saying,

For, although thought involves a certain separation of itself from existence—an opposition between its own content and the reality which it seeks to know—yet its 'other' is not altogether another, but is the very completion of its own nature as knowledge. . . . Thus reality is the perfect unity in variety which thought seeks to achieve or *become*, although in doing so it must needs lose its distinctive or separate character as thought. As Bradley himself expresses this: 'The reality that is presented is taken up by thought in a form not adequate to its nature, and beyond which its nature must appear as another. But this nature also is the nature which thought wants for itself. It is the character which . . . in all its aspects exists within thought already, though in an incomplete form. . . . It is this completion of thought beyond thought which remains for ever another.' (Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, p. 181, my italics.) Hence while knowledge never overcomes the distinction between itself and reality, the reality is the very goal and fulfillment of knowledge. Or, to put the same truth otherwise, knowledge is one aspect of reality, and could attain its own ideal only by being wholly blended with the other and complementary aspects of reality.⁷⁴

Forsyth might well have added Bradley's statement that "there is nothing foreign that thought wants in desiring to be a whole, to comprehend everything,"⁷⁵ as further evidence for his point.

That Bradley avowedly looks to immediate experience as both the source and the goal of thought does not alter the fact that in his appeal he actually uses it to criticize an abstraction, namely, the abstraction of taking all experience as essentially cognitive; to furnish more material for reflective experience, and to test its adequacy. It seems clear that by the time the *Essays* were written Bradley had overcome the need expressed in *Appearance and Reality* to return to immediate experience. He now points out that immediate experience is never lost but persists, remaining as the ground of all other experience; it is always there, ready to perform its functions of providing additional material for thought and of verifying its adequacy. In the *Essays* we find him saying that immediate experience is present within the relational level of Reality as foundational, and that it functions as the background in which terms and relations germinate, so to speak, and from which they grow. Thus immediate experience is seen as the ground of all experience, and

"every distinction and relation rests on an immediate background of which we are aware, and every distinction and relation is also felt, and felt in a sense to belong to an immediate totality. Thus in all experience we still have feeling which is not an object, and at all our moments the entirety of what comes to us, however much distinguished and relational, is felt as comprised within a unity which is not relational."⁷⁶ Immediate experience, no matter how much transcended, both remains and is active. It is not a stage which shows itself at the beginning and then disappears, but it remains at the bottom throughout as fundamental. No longer is there talk of getting away from Reality to the degree in which thought forsakes immediate experience, of a search for immediate experience, where immediate experience is taken as Reality itself, Reality as immediately felt. And thought never destroys the immediate experience from which it arises . . . rather, the origin of knowledge in immediate experience gives a test for its validity and the "one road to the solution of ultimate problems."

Whitehead's Appeal To Immediate Experience

BEFORE commenting on Whitehead's appeal to immediate experience, it is important to recall that his writings, like Bradley's, reveal a considerable development and growth; witness the differences to be found between his philosophy of nature or science and his philosophy of organism. With this in mind we shall be able to bring out more clearly the fact that Whitehead actually appeals to immediate experience in order to expand the field of thought, that is, to find more material for reflective experience and for criticizing and verifying its conclusions. In accord with his view that philosophy is primarily a critique of abstractions, his analysis of experience is essentially factorial, an inquiry to determine the various factors involved in the experienced world.

The problem with which Whitehead starts in his philosophy of nature, the search for the ultimate data of science, clearly arises from a quite different background from that of Bradley's original problem of finding a metaphysic which will satisfy the intellect by taking account of all the factors in experience, including feeling as well as thought. But as Whitehead's philosophy develops, this problem of finding ultimate data changes to much the same kind of metaphysical problem Bradley was concerned with; and with this development the appeal to immediate experience becomes for him more and more an integral part of a critical metaphysical method, and as such draws closer in function to Bradley's appeal.

That Whitehead's appeal to immediate experience serves at bottom this critical function will, I think, become apparent as we follow the course of his adventures with ideas. The terms in which he states his problem may suggest some conflict between the way his appeal actually functions and the way he thinks it functions; but even if this be the case, as I believe it is, we shall postpone any such consideration until we have seen how Whitehead does state some of his problems and how he attempts to resolve them. For, as we shall see, Whitehead's appeal to immediate experience displays a dual nature; as it appears, for example, in *Process and Reality* it plays a richer and fuller part than it plays, say, in *The Concept of Nature*. This dual rôle can be stated in terms of the difference between appealing to immediate experience as part of the traditional empiricist attempt to "ground" science in the "ultimate data" of immediate experience, and making the appeal as part of

a critical metaphysical method, a method of criticizing scientific abstractions and metaphysical dualisms.

In *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge* and *The Concept of Nature*, which represent Whitehead's philosophy of nature, the problem to be dealt with is stated as the question: "What are the ultimate data of science?" This very formulation makes evident the fact that Whitehead is concerned with the central question handed down in the tradition of British empiricism. The object of his philosophy of nature is to find out what is really "given" in immediate experience. He is starting out on the traditional quest for what is "ultimate," in the sense of logically ultimate or foundational, for a philosophy of nature and science. And ultimates or principles are to be identified with what would be found in immediate experience if this experience were stripped of all interpretation. Principles of science are frankly identified with factors in immediate experience; these "given" factors are to furnish the concepts in terms of which all scientific explanation must be expressed. This is a statement of the problem which leads Whitehead to appeal to immediate experience in order to "ground" science in what is there "given." This attempt to "ground" science in experience rests essentially on the traditional notion of British empiricism, that principles of explanation are to be found in immediate experience, a notion in which the distinction between immediate experience and the interpretation of immediate experience disappears.

This function of Whitehead's appeal can be best illustrated in his early works. In *The Concept of Nature* he tries to formulate a "philosophy" of those sciences whose subject-matter is "nature," where "nature" means what we observe by that sort of sense-perception he calls "sense-awareness." He is concerned with "the generalisations of widest scope which can be affected respecting that which is known to us as the direct deliverance of sense-awareness."¹ He develops this notion of sense-awareness: "Nature is that which we observe in perception through the senses. In this sense-perception we are aware of something which is not thought [namely, nature] . . . and the fact of sense-perception has a factor which is not thought. I call this factor sense-awareness. . . . Thus, in sense-perception nature is disclosed as a complex of entities whose mutual relations are expressible in thought without reference to mind."² The "complex of entities" means, of course, a fact with factors in relation.

The factor which is thought comes in to analyze relations within the fact which is not thought but of which we are aware. Whitehead asserts that the ideal of thought is "pure demonstration," i.e., it is to point to what is immediately experienced; he insists that you can determine what is known apart from the way in which it is known. To continue his elucidation of the entities disclosed in sense-awareness:

The entity is so disclosed as a relatum in the complex which is nature. It dawns on an observer because of its relations; but it is an objective for thought in its own bare individuality. Thought cannot proceed otherwise; namely, it cannot proceed without the ideal bare 'it' which is speculatively demonstrated. This setting up of the entity as a bare objective does not ascribe to it an existence apart from the complex in which it has been found by sense-perception. The 'it' for thought is essentially a relatum for sense-awareness.³

Here "speculatively demonstrated" means "denoted." The aim of thought is to find what is immediately experienced, to achieve a simplicity of this sort.

It would appear, then, that Whitehead's basic problem in *The Concept of Nature* is to get back to immediate experience in criticism of abstractions. The object of such a "philosophy of nature" is to find out what is really "given"; this leads him to investigate the entities disclosed to us in the immediate experience of sense-awareness. This is the philosophy of "the thing perceived." So we find him praising the undying vitality of Greek philosophy in its search for the ultimate entities which are the factors of the fact disclosed in sense-awareness.⁴ Whitehead says that the starting-points for thought are entities, primarily with bare individuality, secondarily with properties and relations ascribed to them in the procedure of thought; whereas the starting-points for sense-awareness are factors in the fact of nature. And the fact of nature is just what is disclosed in sense-awareness; thus what sense-awareness discloses is the *entire* subject-matter of knowledge. As he specifically states, these factors are primarily relata, and only secondarily discriminated as distinct individualities—"the immediate fact for awareness is the whole occurrence of nature."⁵ But if the object of knowledge is the experienced world in its totality, and you must not leave anything out at the beginning that you possess in the end, then if there is any more at the end than you really see at the beginning there is something wrong. Put differently, sense-awareness finds everything related; hence thought must pick out the particulars, the ideal bare 'it.' It is interesting to note the contrast between this procedure of analysis and Aristotle's. For although the starting-place of both Aristotle and Whitehead is in what James called "a blooming, buzzing, confusion," their procedures diverge: Aristotle's "factors" (what he calls *archai* or principles) come last as achievements of reflective experience, while Whitehead's factors must be there to be seen in immediate experience (see page 33).

Let us take Whitehead's discussion of time as an illustration of one use of the appeal to immediate experience. He attempts to ground this concept in what he takes to be the ultimate data of immediate experience. The following lengthy quotation will, I trust, clarify the way he uses this appeal. We find Whitehead proposing:

to enter upon a survey of the kinds of entities which are *posited* for knowledge in sense-awareness. In the first place there is posited for us a general fact; namely, something is going on . . . This general fact at once yields for our apprehension two factors, which I will name, the 'discerned' and the 'discernible.' The discerned . . . is the field directly perceived . . . The discernible is all nature as disclosed in that sense-awareness.

. . . The concept of 'period of Time' marks the disclosure in sense-awareness of entities in nature known merely by their temporal relations to discerned entities. . . . But in discerning an event we are also aware of its significance as a relatum in the structure of events . . .

The disclosure in sense-awareness of the structure of events classifies events into those which are discerned in respect to some farther individual character and those which are not disclosed except as elements of the structure. But there is another classification of events which is also inherent in sense-awareness. These are the events whose characters together with those of the discerned events comprise all nature present for discernment. They form the complete general fact which is all nature now present as disclosed in that sense-awareness. . . . The relation of other events to this totality of nature form the texture of time . . .

The unity of this general present fact is expressed by the concept of simultaneity. The general fact is the whole simultaneous occurrence of nature which is now for sense-awareness. This general fact is what I have called the discernible. But in the future I will call it a 'duration.' Our sense-awareness posits for immediate discernment a certain whole . . .

Nature is a process. As in the case of everything directly exhibited in sense-awareness, there can be no explanation of this characteristic of nature. All that can be done is to use language which may speculatively demonstrate it, and also to express the relation of this factor in nature to other factors. . . . Sense-awareness seizes its only chance and presents for knowledge something which is for it alone.⁶

Here we find Whitehead using immediate experience in order to clarify scientific ideas. For the measurableness of time and its serial character are taken as derivative from the properties of durations. "Any concept of all nature as immediately known is always a concept of some duration . . . Thus simultaneity is an ultimate factor in nature, immediate for sense-awareness."⁷ And "what is directly yielded to our knowledge by sense-awareness is a duration." It should be noted, also, that the rest of the chapter on time is largely devoted to explaining how "moments" are derived from durations—that is, how they too must, in the end, come from the data of immediate experience.

Before continuing to examine *The Concept of Nature* I should like to point out that this book is literally the companion of the earlier *Principles of Na-*

tural Knowledge, in which the problem and approach are the same. The method employed in the *Principles of Natural Knowledge* is suggested by Whitehead in the Preface: "The whole investigation is based on the principle that the scientific concepts of space and time are the first outcome of the simplest generalizations from experience, and that they are not to be looked for at the tail end of a welter of differential equations."⁸ From this statement it would seem to follow that all one needs to do is to open ones eyes in order to see what it took Lorentz, Minkowsky, and Einstein all their lives to see—even if you do have to look very hard and to make use of the methods of the physicists, and to take the "second look" that Whitehead introduces in *The Concept of Nature*. This statement is quoted as an illustration of Whitehead's conception of the rôle of the "given," and as symptomatic of a tendency I find running through his writings—to make more of it would probably be to make too much of it.

In *The Concept of Nature* Whitehead expands this notion of sense-awareness, which is described in *The Principles of Natural Knowledge* as a "first sight"; and he manages to hold on to the idea that we can discriminate the factors in nature just by looking, until he is forced to take a "second look" (which turns out to be more than merely looking) on page forty. After he has progressed some distance in his book Whitehead realizes that what he discovers in his immediate experience he discovers because he has read what he has read and learned what he has learned. But he is soon forced to go beyond his first sight. This comes out as follows:

What then is it that science is doing, granting that it is effecting something of importance? My answer is that it is determining the character of things known, namely, the character of apparent nature . . . The characters which science discerns in nature are subtle characters, *not obvious at first sight*. They are relations of relations and characters of characters. But for all their subtlety they are stamped with a certain simplicity which makes their consideration essential in unravelling the complex relations between characters of more perceptive insistence.⁹

That this "second sight" turns out to be more "awareness" is clear in the light of what Whitehead says further on. For when he insists on activity on the part of the "knower" the activity he specifies is a sense of being active rather than an activity. Thus Whitehead says: "The analysis of these adventures (of material objects) makes us *aware* of another character of events, namely their characters as fields of activity."¹⁰

Whitehead himself provides an excellent summary of this sort of knowledge acquired by looking:

There is now reigning in philosophy and in science an apathetic acquiescence in the conclusion that no coherent account can be given of nature

as it is disclosed to us in sense-awareness, without dragging in its relations to mind. The modern account of nature is not, as it should be, merely an account of what the mind knows of nature; but it is also confused with an account of what nature does to the mind . . . In the philosophy of science we seek the general notions which apply to nature, namely, to what we are aware of in perception . . . In other words, the ground taken is this: sense-awareness is an awareness of something. What then is the general character of that something of which we are aware? We do not ask about the percipient or about the process, but about the perceived.¹¹

We shall have occasion to trace the development of Whitehead's appeal to immediate experience through a transitional stage to its fullest expression in *Process and Reality*. But let us first attempt to assay some of the results of this early appeal, this search for the ultimate data which are to furnish the concepts in terms of which all scientific explanation must be expressed, this search for principles of explanation in immediate experience.

We have seen Whitehead attempting to start his critical philosophy from an "ultimate" immediate experience. He certainly intends to appeal to immediate experience in order to include it as a factor of experience that can be interpreted within a framework of general ideas and can be used to criticize abstractions. It must be noted, however, that as he develops what he means by "ultimate"¹² immediate experience, this experience is seen to be "ultimate" not in the general sense which a literal rendering of the words imply, but only in the sense that it is "more ultimate" than some abstract concept; the immediate experience appealed to is itself an abstraction from a still wider experience. This suggests, and quite rightly, that a criticism of abstractions cannot be profitably carried on except in terms of an appeal to other factors abstracted from experience. One can criticize abstractions only in terms of other factors selected from experience.

But there are certain difficulties in Whitehead's way of appealing to immediate experience in order to locate ultimate data. It seems that Whitehead thinks these data have merely to be found waiting in immediate experience—as something just there, before interpretation has done anything (in Woodbridge's terms). The data must be given, not sought for. In Lockian terms, scientific concepts must be identical with simple ideas, first experiences of the world. Whitehead, in deriving the ideas of modern physical theory from immediate experience, seems to try to get at them by just seeing or looking. Instead of holding that the principles of science should be the rationally formulated explanation of the intelligible aspect of things, Whitehead is here saying that principles must be the expression of the immediately perceived spatio-temporal aspect of things; that is, the "ultimate data" of science are identified first with factors encountered in immediate

experience, then with these factors of immediate experience considered as principles.

What is meant by saying that principles should be the rationally formulated explanation of the intelligible aspect of things, is that "principles" (Aristotle's *archai*) are the beginnings of understanding, those ideas in terms of which a subject-matter is rendered intelligible. An *archê* is thus an object of reflective experience that might well be said to emerge at the tail end of a welter of differential equations rather than to be manifest in immediate experience; i.e., principles and theories are the product of reflection, not the deliverance of immediate experience. An *archê* is a postulate in terms of which a subject-matter can be organized and understood, and not something given in sense-awareness and immediately perceived. In other words, the *archai* of the classic Greek tradition express the reasons for things formulated in intelligible discourse, and are themselves the result of reflection, not of mere observation. But for Whitehead, according to his "ontological principle," the only reason for something must be an "actual entity," something that can be perceived. Now it is a rationally formulated principle, not sensations or sense-awareness, that makes a subject-matter intelligible. And the scientific concepts of space and time come from reflective experience, not merely from sense-awareness. That is, science does not "see" structure; it rather employs basic principles as instruments for organizing beliefs into an intelligible system which experience can verify. To go back to the metaphor of writing books, used in the introduction, the contrast is between a formulated principle which can be a hypothesis or theory appropriate to a book, and a perceived "factor" which would have to be expressed in a picture.

So far in *The Principles of Natural Knowledge* and *The Concept of Nature*, we might conclude that Whitehead has been trying to reduce all knowledge to seeing, and then finds he has to see a great deal to account for experience. To adhere rigidly to knowledge as a "seeing" would lead to some peculiar results; for example, we should have to say that the achievements of physics have been due not to any thinking on the part of scientists, but to their sight having grown clearer—since knowledge must come from the immediate data of perception.

Thus for Whitehead nature is not merely measurable but is actually perceived as measured in various ways; what the scientist does is to look, and see these various measures. A contrasting approach might rather hold that nature is spatially measurable in various ways, but that the ways it is measurable become apparent only when some scientist does the measuring. For Whitehead space-time schemes are structures there to be seen in nature—another view might construe them simply as intellectual instruments.¹³ In general, Whitehead's position makes nature, quite apart from mind, the necessary locus of everything that is involved in the process of knowing;

hence nature has to exhibit all the structures the scientist elaborates in his procedures and techniques of knowing. We are required to find different space-time structures there in nature to be seen, instead of being able to interpret those structures as ways of procedures involved in knowing nature. This sort of reasoning would perhaps force the assertion, by analogy, that the structure of grammar is likewise to be found in nature, instead of permitting us to recognize that human discourse has developed a certain grammar. This is why, in Whitehead's system, all discoverable space-time relations must be there to be seen, and why there are in nature "competing serial time systems" or "alternative temporal series."¹⁴

Whitehead realizes that if everything in knowledge must be found in sense-awareness, he is faced with the problem of getting from the nature that is perceived to the mathematically formulated world of physical theory, which he also accepts. The first step in bridging this gulf is to get points (temporal-spatial relata) out of immediate experience by the "method of extensive abstraction." This method analyzes immediate experience in order to abstract dimensionless points from what is actually given as extended. There might seem a question as to the advisability and the necessity of attempting to "ground" points in immediate experience—immediate experience does not contribute much to their explanation. This, of course, is not to deny the value of the concept of a point as a hypothesis or *archê* warranted by the service it renders. A physicist's theory is an instrument for doing something, and the theory may be valid in terms of whether or not it does what it is supposed to do. But Whitehead's approach almost obliges him to see or experience immediately the terms of the theory, e.g., points; even though this involves the subtle "second look" of *The Concept of Nature*. This means that he must have involved in the object of sight more than an eye alone can see: his "seeing" must use the tools and methods of the mathematical-physicist. His original sense-awareness must now be immediately aware of complex spatio-temporal relations.

To sum up this discussion, if the search for ultimate principles of scientific explanation leads us to immediate experience, and if our minds must then simply record what is eternally there to be seen, and can have no active part in organizing the observations of the scientist, then a stricture is placed on science which issues in a rigidity and inflexibility of theory not necessary on a more functional view. It would seem discreet and profitable to understand principles of science not as "ultimate data" given once and for all in immediate experience, but rather as the refined product of a sustained intellectual enterprise, with an indispensable rôle as cultural formulations capable of elaboration, refinement, and growth.

I have noted that Whitehead's analysis of experience grows more complex as his philosophy develops, and that this analysis is essentially factorial.

As his philosophy of science and nature progresses toward a philosophy of organism, it is interesting to observe how he finds the ground of the new factors he discovers in experience to be the same sort of thing with which he begins, namely, a sort of "awareness." There is no doubt that he discovers more and more as his view develops, and he is not compelled to stay within the limitations of experience as mere sense-awareness; but his progressive expansion of experience seems to turn out in the end to be an enlarged and increasingly complicated "awareness." I now turn to this expansion of experience in such books as *Science and the Modern World*, *Symbolism*, and *Modes of Thought*, and consider briefly Whitehead's appeal to immediate experience as it undergoes a transition from the initial search for the "ultimate data of science" to a search for more material for reflective experience which may serve as the basis for criticizing its present conclusions.

In *Science and the Modern World* we see some of the results of that "second look" emphasized in connection with *The Concept of Nature*, which discloses factors of experience "not observed at first sight." I am here concerned with *Science And The Modern World* only as it brings in the notion of "value," which had been left out of the previous book. Nature was there described as "that which is disclosed in sense-perception," and value is not perceived by sense. Whitehead now brings it in as a part of immediate experience—as one more factor to be aware of. Value now acquires a status in nature. Whitehead says, value is the intrinsic, *immediate* character of an event. John Goheen states this notion succinctly: for Whitehead "to be" is to have value, and "to be more" is to have more value. The system of nature is still a spatio-temporal system of events, but there are now additional elements in it.

What Whitehead means by "value" is the "realization of enduring patterns in nature." When men find valuable things they find them, not merely things that "cause" value in the mind. Like Dewey, Whitehead encounters situations which are good or bad. But for Dewey nothing can be said about things as immediately "having" a certain quality; what can be said must concern the conditions and consequences value gives rise to. Immediate values are "had"—this is a non-cognitive process. Where cognition enters value it comes only at the end of an intelligent process of evaluation. But for Whitehead "value" is something every actual entity exhibits, something intrinsic to all actual entities apart from their being evaluated. In Whitehead's own words,

Remembering the poetic rendering of our concrete experience, we see at once that the element of value, of being valuable, of having value, of being an end in itself, of being something which is for its own sake, must not be omitted in any account of an event as the most concrete actual something. 'Value' is the word I use for the intrinsic reality of an event.

Value is an element which permeates through and through the poetic view of nature. We have only to transfer to the very texture of realization in itself the attainment of value. But there is no such thing as mere value.¹⁵

Thus it would seem that "value" is a complication within nature, or the nature of events, a pattern there to be perceived.

Whitehead further expands the notion of immediate experience to include non-sensuous perception of a type called "perception of causal efficacy," in his *Symbolism* (published in 1927, two years after *Science and the Modern World*). This new non-sensuous perception is part of that immediate experience appealed to in the earlier books, although considerably and importantly enlarged, and clearly on the way to its fullest development in *Process and Reality*. In *Symbolism* Whitehead says,

It is required that we distinguish that type of mental functioning which by its nature yields immediate acquaintance with fact, from that type of functioning which is only trustworthy by reason of its satisfaction of certain criteria provided by the first type of functioning . . . I shall maintain that the first type of functioning is properly to be called 'Direct Recognition,' and the second type 'Symbolic Reference,' I shall also endeavor to illustrate the doctrine that all human symbolism, however superficial it may seem, is ultimately to be reduced to trains of this fundamental symbolic reference, trains which finally connect percepts in alternative modes of direct recognition.¹⁶

—these, of course, are the two modes of "presentational immediacy" and "causal efficacy." What is common to these two modes exhibits what I have called Whitehead's reduction of all relations to matters of space-time connectedness or "experiential togetherness," for the common factors are precisely *sense-data* and *locality* in the system of extension. That is "causal efficacy" is fitted to "presentational immediacy" by their sharing of a locus in space and time.

In developing the meaning of these two modes Whitehead says: "It is the thesis of this work that human symbolism has its origin in the symbolic interplay between two distinct modes of direct perception of the external world. There are, in this way, two sources of information about the external world, closely connected but distinct."¹⁷ Just as the higher "presentational immediacy" is clearest in high-grade organisms, so is the more primitive "causal efficacy" clearest in low-grade organisms, e.g., in a flower's turning to the sun. The perception of conformation to realities in the environment is the primitive element in our external experience. One part of our experience is vivid, and definite in our consciousness; the other type is vague, however insistent, and is heavy with the contact of things gone by . . . this latter is

the mode of causal efficacy. Stated a little differently, "Causal efficacy is the hand of the settled past in the formation of the present. The sense-data must therefore play a double rôle in perception. In the mode of presentational immediacy they are projected to exhibit the contemporary world in its spatial relations. In the mode of causal efficacy they exhibit the almost instantaneously precedent bodily organs as imposing their characters on the experience in question."¹⁸

Whitehead emphasizes the spatio-temporal character of the mode of presentational immediacy: "Our direct perception of the contemporary world is thus reduced to extension, defining i) our own geometrical perspectives, and ii) possibilities of mutual perspectives for other contemporary entities *inter se*, and iii) possibilities of division."¹⁹ A little further on, and on the same topic, we find: "Our direct perception via our sense of our immediate extensive shape, in a certain geometrical perspective to ourselves, and in certain geometrical relations to the contemporary world, remains an ultimate fact." One might well pause over the innocuous use of the word "ultimate" here. What indicated a principle of explanation there to be seen in immediate experience is now merely a reference to the "welter of experience," which is immediate experience but which is itself not appealed to as part of an intellectual process, although that process is therein grounded.

Now I have suggested that in the end Whitehead makes of this new factor of "causal efficacy" another illustration of the same sort of "awareness" we found knowledge to be in *The Concept of Nature*. That is, "causal efficacy" becomes an awareness that we see with our eyes. This is shown clearly in *Modes of Thought*:

We look at the scenery, at a picture, or at an approaching car on the road, as an external presentation given for our mental entertainment or anxiety. There it is, exposed to view. But on reflection we elicit the underlying experience that we were *seeing with our eyes*. Usually this fact is not in explicit consciousness at the moment of perception. The bodily reference is recessive, the visible presentation dominant. . . . The current philosophic doctrines, mostly derived from Hume, are defective by reason of their neglect of bodily reference.²⁰

This is made even more explicit in Whitehead's consideration of the question how we observe nature. He first gives the conventional answer, "through our senses." He points out that the sense most concentrated on is sight; but sight is really peculiarly barren, giving us merely information of

external regions disclosed as colored . . . But there are two accompaniments of this experience which should make us suspicious of accepting it at its face value, as any direct disclosure of the metaphysical nature of things. In the first place, even in visual experience we are also aware of

the intervention of the body. *We know directly that we see with our eyes.* That is a vague feeling but extremely important. Secondly, every type of crucial experiment proves that what we see, and where we see it, depends entirely upon the physiological functioning of our body.²¹

So far in tracing the development of Whitehead's thought, it seems that each new factor discriminated in experience has turned out to be something we can be "aware" of, in much the same way that knowledge was taken to be an awareness in the earlier writings. In *Symbolism* Whitehead realizes that he had left a lot out of experience as he had described it, and he therefore adds to his analysis the notion of a non-sensuous perception of "causal efficacy." But here still the new factor in experience appears to be reduced to just one more instance of the same sort of awareness as sense-perception was discovered to be. Now we are aware not only of desks and stones but also of our eyes. The point is that Whitehead makes the added perception of causal efficacy a kind of "seeing," and in general identifies all experiencing with "awareness." For example, when Whitehead wants to inquire into that characteristic of life which he calls mind, he asks whether he can *directly observe* anything in nature corresponding to it. He says, "We are *directly conscious* of our purposes as directive of our actions."²² In another place he says that "all knowledge is conscious discrimination of objects experienced . . . and all knowledge is derived from, and verified by, direct intuitive observation."²³ Here then is a clear statement of the empiricist assumption that knowledge is verified by immediate experience, and the part of the quotation concerned with derivability lends itself readily to the notion that immediate experience properly gives knowledge—and apparently the most certain knowledge.

In making my critical comments, and in following the development of Whitehead's use of immediate experience, I have tried to bring to the fore what might be called his least criticized assumption. At the same time I have traced this development primarily in order to illustrate how Whitehead actually uses his appeal to immediate experience as part of a factorial analysis of experience, even though he seems also involved in a Lockian search for ultimate given data. But before going on to the fully developed use of his appeal in the metaphysical method of *Process and Reality*, I shall try to make clearer what this least criticized assumption is.

In the early *Concept of Nature* we have found that in analyzing experience Whitehead tends to treat mind as a pure spectator²⁴ of natural events: those events can be coherently accounted for without "dragging in" their relation to anything "mental." He makes knowledge a perception of factors in a system of temporo-spatial relations; he considers it throughout to be a kind of "seeing." Whitehead is, of course, trying to give as full a description of experience as possible, and he is certainly not consciously concerned with

reducing all knowledge to "awareness" or to the selective vision of a spectator. But there does seem to be a conflict between what he is actually doing and what he thinks he is doing. He thinks he is expanding the "content" of experience; and he does perform the valuable task of discriminating various factors encountered in man's experience of nature, in such a way as to insure them all a status in a single system. But at the same time he incidentally gives to immediate experience the static character of a "given," and to the knower the character of a passive "spectator." This does not mean that Whitehead's "knower" cannot go on to see more and more, or that he must stay within the limits of experience considered as mere sense-perception in the traditional sense. But Whitehead's progressive expansion of experience has turned out so far to be simply the discovery of a more complicated kind of awareness. And this is apparently a result of the assumption that ultimate data and principles of explanation are to be found in immediate experience.

Certainly the *Principles of Natural Knowledge* and *The Concept of Nature* at least seem to hold experience to be a "seeing," and to view knowledge as the act of a mind which is conceived like a passive eye. They take all experience as a kind of "looking" in which we are immediately aware of the "nature" of the mathematical physicist. For if nature is closed to mind, and if mind remains "outside" nature in the sense that mind cannot interact with it, how can the consequence be avoided that mind must be assumed to be wholly passive in knowing? Now if mind is passive and can do nothing in nature but see it, then even though it is related to nature, everything which appears in the field of mind or reflective experience must be located in nature, and there will be no operation or activity of mind, no interaction between it and the nature in which it is located. Both the objects of sense-awareness and the concepts of mathematical-physics will have their loci in a common system of spatio-temporal relations, and mind too will have its own locus in a "percipient event" in this system—its position will be that of an eye in nature. And up to this point, the more Whitehead belabours mind the more he finds it illustrating the characteristic passivity he has already ascribed to it, merely observing nature's active events without participating or inter-acting with them.

Now it may of course be said that, far from giving mind the character of a "spectator," Whitehead is particularly concerned to emphasize mind as an instance of activity and process. After all, he did write *Process and Reality*; and in that work he construes experience and mind as anything but mere spectators. For each "actual entity," each "really real thing," is a pulling together or "concrescence" of different feelings. This self-activity of all actual entities make "process" something distinctively active, and experience is interpreted as pre-eminently a process.

But when Whitehead does talk of experience as a process, it turns out to be the product of an activity rather than itself something active. For example, in *Adventures of Ideas*, the process of experience is discussed as the *feeling* of our bodily conformations to the past; he illustrates the "activity" of experience by the way the first three syllables of the proper name 'United States' carry one to the fourth by the "energizing of the past occasion as it claims its self-identical existence as a living issue in the present." This is simply a case of the body driving one to the utterance of the last syllable to conform with the past.

Again, it may be said that each actual entity is the cause of its own activity (*causa sui*), and thus its own reason for excluding what it does exclude. Now I am not denying that if you should start from this interpretation and read human experience in these terms, you would make of it something essentially active, as I believe Whitehead intends to do. The question I am raising is whether or not he really carries this analysis of process over into his analysis of human experience; if he does carry it over, how far does he do so? And I suggest that he has so organized his philosophy that he finds it very difficult to apply the notion of activity to the process of human thought. Most of the difficulties Whitehead has with this notion result from his early assumption concerning immediate experience. On the other hand it seems true that immediate experience is treated on two different levels even in *Process and Reality*; while some of Whitehead's notions concerning human experience suffer from his early presuppositions, at the same time a more fruitful appeal to immediate experience is manifest in his discussions, for example, of bifurcation and bipolarity.

Let us consider first the way he extends immediate experience to include mind as illustrative of the earlier and still persisting trend of his thought, before turning to his fullest appeal to immediate experience.²⁵ In his philosophy of science Whitehead works out the spatio-temporal structure of nature without reference to mind—nature is "closed" to mind. When he later proceeds to put mind into this nature, he finds that it becomes merely an illustration of a scheme that has been completely worked out without reference to its existence. Mind becomes the awareness of a particular kind of complex relatedness of things, rather than, for example, a certain kind of activity. Mind is a perception of relations with a spatio-temporal structure. Any mind involves a prehension of relations, and this prehension seems to be conceived as a spatio-temporal "slant" or perspective on things that involve logical propositions. As Whitehead says: "mind is a process of prehensive unification."²⁶

Whenever Whitehead's meaning of mind is pushed it turns out to be more "awareness;" e.g., mind is defined as awareness of negative judgments (possibilities). In this sense logical structure is reduced to a spatio-temporal

structure, albeit the most complex one. Mind is an awareness of a complex system of perspectives. But it must be noted that I am here using the word "spatio-temporal" in a general and not a narrow sense—in the sense in which space-time is derivative from the generalized notion of "extension." For Whitehead says that every element of our experience has an "extensive" character, a voluminous character, where extension expresses the interconnectedness of all things, the basic system of internal relations. Even though the relations between eternal objects may be "logical," such objects must all be related actually to an actual entity. And the relation of an eternal object to an actual entity is that called "ingression"—a notion conveying the coming of an eternal object into a particular locus within a spatio-temporal framework of events. Whatever counts in the universe must be real *somewhere*; the only real things, then, have a spatio-temporal character, and logical relations become an "experiential togetherness" in some spatio-temporal event, an ingression of some eternal object in some actual entity. If the "ultimate data" of knowledge are the concepts in terms of which all scientific explanation must be carried on, the "ultimate facts" of nature are events connected by their spatial-temporal relations; and these relations are in the main reducible to the property of events that they contain or extend over other events. Events have a structure whose character "receives its exposition from the relations of time and space."²⁷

In the end the only standing a relation seems to have is spatio-temporal; it would seem that one can be certain only of such relations. Even the relations between eternal objects have a spatio-temporal character, since eternal objects must be related in an actual entity according to the ontological principle, which states that "actual entities are the only reasons; so that to search for a reason is to search for one or more actual entities."²⁸ To be a possibility for process is to be something that will or will not happen in the future, even though whether or not a possibility is actualized depends on the principle of concretion. Universals must be seen as actual in a realm of eternal objects which are within the spatio-temporal frame-work of an actual entity. If all structure is essentially spatio-temporal, a perceptible structure of which we can become "aware," then since all the possible content of knowledge is there to be seen if we could but see clearly enough, there is nothing left for the knower to do but "see," but remain a "spectator."

It may be said that the above does not apply to Whitehead's genetic analysis, his analysis of prehensions. But I shall try to show that the emphasis on "awareness" is really carried on in the theory of prehensions; the only difference is that in this theory we are "aware" of certain selected feelings instead of being aware of all, or of the "total occurrence of nature." As Whitehead says: "In the genetic theory, the cell is exhibited as appropriating, for the foundation of its own existence, the various elements of the

universe out of which it arises. Each process of appropriation of a particular element is termed a prehension. The ultimate elements of the universe, thus appropriated, are the already-constituted actual entities, and the eternal objects. All the actual entities are positively prehended, but only a *selection* of the eternal objects."²⁹ Again when talking of higher feelings in *Process and Reality* Whitehead makes of "intellectual feelings" prehensions or perspectives on propositions.

Since all things are related, all mind has to do is to see orprehend these relations, and all thought has to do is to elucidate what is thus immediately experienced. For the present it is sufficient to note that "truth" means for Whitehead a relation between the right actual entities and the right propositions. Here the word "right" refers to the experiential togetherness of the "component elements of individual experience on the one hand and on the other hand the component elements of the external world."³⁰ Here at least there is little doubt that the "ultimate appeal is to naïve experience."

I should like to elaborate on the fact that in establishing a relation between thought and immediate experience Whitehead seems to make of reflective experience a complex sort of awareness wherein the most certain knowledge is still a kind of seeing. We have seen (page 29) that the immediate fact for awareness is the whole occurrence of nature, the experienced world in its totality.³¹ The nature of the "abstraction" that is knowledge is such that mind becomes an observer of nature's active events without participating in them. Mind is a specially organized perception or prehension of the spatial-temporal relatedness of all things, or is construed as a consequence of this relatedness (from the standpoint of a 'percipient event'.) That is, mind is conceived of in terms of prehensions, not in functional terms; and prehensions have the character of "feelings," not of "doings."

Mind, then, involves a feeling or a prehension of relations. Between eternal objects the relations can be logical, but between actual entities and eternal objects the relation is essentially spatial-temporal or perceptible. The notions of ingression and concrescence denote a coming into a particular locus within a complex framework of events. And the important thing to note is that the structure of the relations of things is basically a structure which is perceivable, using "perceivable" in contrast to "knowable"—a spatio-temporal structure in the most general sense: in this sense the intelligible relations between things are reduced to spatio-temporal relations, to an "experiential togetherness," a "togetherness" which is in the temporal world. The difference between a perceptible structure, for which nature is conceived as a system of space-time connections, a system of extension, and an intelligible structure, is the difference between merely seeing the structure of things and understanding the implications of the relations of things for the purpose of working and manipulating them to some end.

Thus Whitehead seems to make of reflective experience or knowledge a sort of awareness of things. He develops it out of the spatial-temporal perspective of immediate experience in such a manner that instead of being an active doing, a thinking or activity, it becomes an awareness of more and more complex relations within the spatio-temporal scheme, or a "relation between a nexus of actual entities and a proposition with its logical subjects members of the nexus"³² (logical subjects are the actual entities involved in the proposition which become bare 'its'). As early as the *Principles of Natural Knowledge*, knowledge is defined as "the awareness of the natural relations of one element in nature (the percipient event) to the rest of nature."

Concerning this reflective experience³³ in its developed stage as "conscious perception," R. Das says, "in conscious perception there is a basic physical feeling from which a propositional feeling of the perceptive kind arises and this gets integrated with the basic physical feeling. When the logical subjects (ideal bare 'its') and the predicate are derived from the same physical feeling, the resulting propositional feeling is perceptive. It is direct and authentic when the predicate of the proposition, felt by it, is actually exemplified in the nexus of actual entities physically felt, and is *directly* derived from the physical feeling without any reversion. That is, conscious perception feels the contrast of a nexus as fact with a possibility derived from the nexus and limited by it, and exemplified by it. Perception is not necessarily true (since it may involve reversion) and requires examination in the sense that *we have to see* that it is based on a *direct authentic perceptive* feeling and has not involved reversion at any point." Now only propositions can be true or false, and in accordance with what has been said above it can be seen that truth is a relatedness of the right proposition with the right actual entities. "Truth and falsehood always require some element of sheer givenness . . . the logical subjects of a proposition supply the element of sheer givenness requisite."³⁴ A proposition is true if the eternal object which is the predicate is really exemplified in the nexus which is the logical subject.³⁵ Thus propositions are always theories or suppositions about actuality.

I have here tried to show that at least in places Whitehead talks as though knowing were a sort of immediate awareness³⁶ (although he does not always talk this way) rather than a kind of doing, of active process; and that he talks as though truth were a correspondence between propositions and actual entities rather than a certain way in which propositions can function.

Before leaving this consideration of the ways in which Whitehead's pre-suppositions about immediate experience affect the development of his later thought, let us consider the notion of emotional intensity as a final illustration.

Whitehead employs emotional intensity as part of his attempt to bring

nature and life together. The emotional intensity of life is the physicist's energy, both being the "matter" of things, what makes each thing a particular, and different from other things. Emotional intensity comes from a certain organization of the structure of feeling; feelings when unified in a focus have a certain "subjective form" which is the degree of emotional intensity. Whitehead is again insisting on the emotional as a basis of all experience—the total pattern of living is meaningless except as a reference to the background of feeling within which that total pattern arises.³⁷

As Whitehead says:

Every actual entity has the capacity for knowledge, and there is graduation in the intensity of various items of knowledge . . . When we survey the chequered history of our own capacity for knowledge, does common sense allow us to believe that the operations of judgment, operations which require definition in terms of conscious apprehension, are those operations which are foundational in existence?³⁸ . . . The primitive form of physical experience is emotional . . . blind emotion . . . In the language appropriate to the higher stages of experience—feeling . . . Thus the primitive experience is emotional feeling . . . But the feeling is subjectively rooted in the immediacy of the present occasion: it is what the occasion feels for itself, as derived from the past and as merging into the future . . . The emotional appetitive elements in our conscious experience are those which most closely resemble the basic elements of all physical experience.³⁹

Another way of putting the example is, "The partial nature of a feeling [a positive prehension], other than its complete satisfaction, is manifest by the impossibility of understanding its generation without recourse to the whole subject."⁴⁰ And,

a conceptual feeling arises in some incomplete phase of its subject and passes into a supervening phase in which it has found integration with other feelings . . . Also the integral feeling has its subjective form with its pattern of intensiveness. This patterned intensiveness regulates the distinctive relative importance of each element of the datum as felt in that feeling. This intensive regulation of that eternal object as felt in the integrated datum is determined by the subjective form of the conceptual feeling.⁴¹

These quotations may be summed up: Whitehead is trying to account for feelings in the sense of emotional intensity in terms of relations to something else. The "something else" is the structure of relations; structure is taken as perceptible rather than as intelligible—and the structure of perception is spatio-temporal. In this sense Whitehead is "reducing" intelligible structure to a structure of perspectives. I might add that this is the sort of

difficulty Whitehead becomes involved in by trying to get subject-matter out of principles instead of recognizing principles as instruments for the understanding of subject-matter, and by trying to derive subject-matter from the structural framework itself derived from it.

In one sense Whitehead's philosophy is an inverted idealism: where the idealist tries to get all of nature into mind, Whitehead tries to get all of mind into nature. He tries to put everything he knows into a system of space-time relations; thus the whole of mathematical-physical theory must somehow be gotten into the world of sense-awareness. Whitehead starts by trying to get structure out of immediate experience, out of our perception of the immediate past as immanent in the present, or out of the present as loaded with the past and big with the future—thus we find temporal relations or structures in our immediate experience. He ends up by trying to get immediate experience out of structure, to derive emotional intensity from a prehension of structure.

But there is also in *Process and Reality* evidence of a development in Whitehead's notion of the function of an appeal to immediate experience. He uses immediate experience not merely as the source of given "ultimate data" in which to "ground" science, but also as an instrument for criticizing the selective products and dualisms of reflection—as part of a metaphysical critique of abstractions. This appeal to immediate experience on a second level, in its widest scope, and as part of the critical metaphysical method of his philosophy of organism, may be illustrated by the doctrines of bifurcation and bipolarity as these are found in *Process and Reality*.

This broader use of the appeal to immediate experience as part of a method of criticizing abstractions and dualisms is quite obvious in one of Whitehead's closing statements about prehensions. He says:

The theory of 'prehensions' embodies a protest against the 'bifurcation' of nature. It embodies even more than that: Its protest is against the bifurcation of actualities. In the analysis of actuality the antithesis between publicity and privacy obtrudes itself at every stage. . . .

[But] the theory of prehensions is founded upon the doctrine that there are no concrete facts which are merely public, or merely private. The distinction between publicity and privacy is a distinction of reason, and is not a distinction between mutually exclusive concrete facts. The sole concrete facts, in terms of which actualities can be analysed, are prehensions; and every prehension has its public side and its private side. Its public side is constituted by the complex datum prehended; and its private side is constituted by the subjective form through which a private quality is imposed on the public datum. The separations of perceptual fact from emotional fact; and of causal fact from emotional fact, and from perceptual fact; and of perceptual fact, emotional fact, and causal fact,

from purposive fact; have constituted a complex of bifurcations, fatal to a satisfactory cosmology. The facts of nature are the actualities; and the facts into which the actualities are divisible are their prehensions, with their public origins, their private forms, and their private aims.⁴²

Here, then, Whitehead is appealing to immediate experience to criticize the abstraction which is life considered from only the public, objective view.

The discussions of dipolarity also illustrate the appeal to immediate experience in criticism of abstractions. As Whitehead says: "Any instance of experience is dipolar, whether that instance be God or an actual occasion of the world. The origination of God is from the mental pole, the origination of an actual occasion is from the physical pole; but in either case these elements, consciousness, thought, sense-perception, belong to the derivative 'impure' phases of the concrescence, if in any effective sense they enter at all."⁴³ And, of course, "each actuality is essentially bipolar, physical and mental." Furthermore:

in each concrescence there is a twofold aspect of the creative urge. In one aspect there is the origination of simple causal feelings; and in the other aspect there is the origination of conceptual feelings. These contrasted aspects will be called the physical and the mental poles of an actual entity. No actual entity is devoid of either pole; though their relative importance differs in different actual entities . . .

Thus an actual entity is essentially dipolar, with its physical and mental poles; and even the physical world cannot be properly understood without reference to its other side, which is the complex of mental operations.⁴⁴

This critical appeal is elucidated further:

the dipolar character of concrescent experience provides in the physical pole for the objective side of experience, derivative from an external actual world, and provides in the mental pole for the subjective side of experience, derivative from the subjective conceptual valuations correlate to the physical feelings. The mental operations have a double office. They achieve, in the immediate subject, the subjective aim of that subject as to the satisfaction to be obtained from its own initial data. . . . Secondly, the physical purposes of a subject by their valuations determine the relative efficiency of the various feelings to enter into the objectifications of that subject in the creative advance beyond itself.⁴⁵

And in writing of feelings there is the same tendency to use immediate experience as a basis for criticism and expansion of the field of experience; although the analysis is carried on largely in terms of perception and of the analogy with the process of seeing. For a feeling is "the appropriation of some elements in the universe to be components in the real internal consti-

tution of its subject. The elements are the initial data; they are what the feeling feels. But they are felt under an abstraction. The process of the feeling involves negative prehensions which effect elimination. Thus the initial data are felt under a 'perspective' which is the objective datum of the feeling."⁴⁶ And in a feeling "the actual world, selectively appropriated, is the presupposed datum, not formless but with its own realized form selectively germane."⁴⁷ The main function of intellectual feelings is to "heighten emotional intensity."

The importance of immediate experience as a means of criticizing abstractions is perhaps more clearly expressed in *Process and Reality* than in any other work of Whitehead's. As he says, "Our datum is the actual world, including ourselves; and this actual world spreads itself for observation in the guise of the topic of our immediate experience. The elucidation of immediate experience is the sole justification for any thought; and the starting point for thought is the analytic observation of components of this experience."⁴⁸ And the task of philosophy is to recover the external totality from which it originates and which the "selective character of the individual obscures."

All of this seems to point to a double strain running through Whitehead's thought. If we push his analysis of process we arrive at a concept of nature which is essentially active, where each actual entity is active and is the cause of its own activity, where immediate experience is appealed to as part of a metaphysical or cosmological criticism of abstractions to the end of framing a "coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted."⁴⁹ If we push his analysis of human experience we find that his analysis of process does not seem to carry over fully; rather, though his analysis of human experience reveals a progressive addition to the factors encountered in the experienced world, each addition retains the passive characteristic of the first factor discriminated, sense-awareness.

This basic "seeing" is construed as a relation, not as an activity, for all things are what they are in virtue of their relations to everything else in the universe. This "double strain" might be said to be the result of a conflict in Whitehead's philosophy between his actual use of immediate experience as part of a process of criticism, and his acceptance of the traditional empiricist notion that principles of explanation are to be found in immediate experience. This traditional view, as it manifests itself, leads him to talk of immediate experience as knowledge, and as the most certain, clear, and distinct knowledge at that. This is why Whitehead, starting with an emphasis on nature as "closed" to mind, must see nature's mathematical or spatio-temporal (extensive) structure spread out there in the world. And what he sees must also be the "nature" of the mathematical physicist, since he agrees with the latter's interpretations. This leads him to appeal to immediate

experience to find in it the factors and traits of which, for example, space and time must be "abstractions."

Thus wherever the physicist may get, his conclusions have to be read back into immediate experience; this is a case of the difference between "abstracting" from immediate experience and building on it, of the inability to get away from the immediate experience with which you start. The empiricist tradition, then, seems to be responsible for that part of Whitehead's philosophy which would make nature and immediate experience a system of spatio-temporal connections, a system of extended structures, there to be seen or perceived rather than to be worked with and manipulated. One might ask, is mathematical physics *the* truth about the world, or only one way of interpreting the world? Can we best understand the social life of man in terms of mathematics and physics, or can we better understand mathematics and physics as social enterprises? Shall we interpret scientific knowledge as an immediate "seeing," or as functional in character, as a process of re-making and refining gross experience? Not that mathematics cannot in fact be taken either way, either as functional in character, or as possessing the character of an immediate seeing.

In these terms Whitehead may be said to be getting more immediate experience into science rather than getting more science out of it. He finds that the philosopher and scientist must get back to immediate experience to secure there a place to rest from his labors. On the other hand, as I have tried to show, Whitehead's developed conception of the critical function of immediate experience does introduce changes even into his philosophy of nature. For in the later *Process and Reality* and *Adventures of Ideas* the "problem of science" is no longer conceived in terms of a search for ultimate data or principles of explanation in immediate experience, but as concerned with "the understanding of individual facts as illustrations of general principles."⁵⁰ Scientific curiosity now means: "the craving of reason that the facts discriminated in experience be understood. It means the refusal to be satisfied with the bare welter of fact, or even with the bare habit of routine. The first step in science and philosophy has been made when it is grasped that every routine exemplifies a principle which is capable of statement in abstraction from its particular exemplifications."⁵¹ Indeed, Aristotle's work is praised "as an example of a majestic inductive generalization, appealing to the obvious facts, and neglecting the welter of minor differences."⁵²

The task of both science and philosophy is now stated as the attempt "to understand how in fact the human mind can successfully set to work for the gradual definition of its habitual ideas."⁵³ And an essentially critical function is proclaimed for both, since "science and philosophy mutually criticize each other, and provide imaginative material for each other."⁵⁴ Whitehead finds

a concrete illustration of a problem of science wherein a general principle is achieved in Plato's "Receptacle." He says,

Plato's Receptacle may be conceived as the necessary community within which the course of history is set, in abstraction from all the particular historical facts. I have directed attention to Plato's doctrine of the Receptacle because, at the present moment, physical science is nearer to it than at any period since Plato's death. The space-time of modern mathematical physics, conceived in abstraction from the particular formulae which apply to the happenings in it, is almost exactly Plato's Receptacle.⁵⁵

This is what a search for 'ultimate data' becomes when the strictures of operating within the traditional notion of mind as passive are discarded.

We have seen how Whitehead was led to his search for the ultimate data of science, for principles, by his view that mind is passive, is a spectator. Now, in his developed system, as found in *Process and Reality* and *Adventures of Ideas*, both mind and experience are treated as processes; and with this view his notion of "principle" correspondingly changes. Getting away from the traditional empiricist view has led to his formulation of philosophy as a system of general ideas in terms of which all experience can be interpreted, and these general ideas take the form of genuine principles of intelligibility which are to be criticized and verified by immediate experience. The postulates, the whole categoreal scheme of the first part of *Process and Reality*, are now his "ultimate" principles; to be criticized by immediate experience, not found in it as something simply there to be seen. Principles are no longer considered as given, as immediate data of experience, they are genuine *archai*, in the sense laid down on page thirty-three; here is a turning from the search for ultimate data to an attempt at formulating genuine principles for a philosophy of organism, and this is reflected in his philosophy of nature. This appeal to immediate experience, as part of the methodology of his metaphysics, represents the last stage of the development of his use of immediate experience, wherein it functions as part of a philosophy which is primarily a critique of abstractions and in a manner close to that of Bradley.

In immediate experience Whitehead finds the complexity which is the total occurrence of nature, and it is the achievement of this complexity toward which immediate experience is directed. Simplicity comes in only with thought—to achieve this simplicity is the function of thought. In his own words, "The explanatory purpose of philosophy is often misunderstood. Its business is to explain the emergence of the more abstract things from the more concrete things." In a recent review by Mason Gross this aspect of Whitehead's philosophy is admirably stated, reading as follows:

It is Whitehead's contention that every science, every specialized study

or activity, necessarily abstracts from the full 'welter' of experience in order to do, properly, adequately, and legitimately, its own special job . . . To call science an abstraction does not mean . . . that it is abstract in the usual sense of that word. It means that its subject-matter is only a part of our full and complete experience. Philosophy as the critique of abstractions has the task of pointing out the limitations consequent upon specialization . . .⁵⁶

Thus, in conclusion, it would seem that Whitehead, especially in his early works and in his philosophy of science, appeals to immediate experience to find there what is given for experience as ultimate data or as ultimate principles of explanation; while in his philosophy of organism, as expressed in his later work, he actually appeals to immediate experience both as part of the reformulated philosophy of nature appearing in *Adventures of Ideas* and *Process and Reality* and as part of his metaphysical method, a method of criticism wherein a highly meritorious task is accomplished, that of analyzing the factors of experience in such a way as to contribute to the growth and development of systematic philosophy.

Dewey's Appeal To Immediate Experience

ON July 7, 1943, John Dewey reaffirmed his position that philosophy is essentially criticism of socially important beliefs, a criticism of beliefs which are integral to the social and cultural life of communities. From this point of view, philosophy emerges in collective or social experience when specific problems and conflicts concerning the relation of man to nature or to his fellowman arise. For our purpose the most significant thing about this definition is its insistence that problems are always determinate and specific. A problem which is no particular problem is no problem at all. Thus the first western philosophers, the Greeks, were faced with such specific problems as, "what are the place and rôle of knowledge and reason in the conduct of life?"¹ And in evaluating the Greek solutions to these problems Dewey views them in the context of the culture and temper of the time in which the problems became critical.

Philosophic criticism involves an examination of the way in which ideas, taken as solutions to specific problems, function within their wider context. Dewey appeals to immediate experience in the course of this critical enterprise. His appeal is always specific, and it takes him to the context within which ideas are functioning—to non-reflective or immediate experience.

Thus the method of philosophic criticism of socially important beliefs resembles the method of that criticism of certain specific beliefs that is scientific inquiry. All inquiry, scientific or philosophic, appeals to a relevant context, and this context turns out to be some immediate experience. As Dewey says:

the scientific inquirer assumes as a matter of course that experience, controlled in specifiable ways, is the avenue that leads to the facts and laws of nature. He uses reason and calculation freely, but he sees to it that ventures of this theoretical sort start from and terminate in directly experienced subject-matters . . . The vine of pendant theory is attached at both ends to the pillars of observed subject-matter.²

In the case of the natural sciences we thus habitually treat "experience" as a starting-point, as a method for dealing with nature, as the goal in which nature is disclosed for what it is, and as setting problems and testing solutions.

For Dewey the function of the appeal to immediate experience in philo-

sophic inquiry is the same as its function in scientific inquiry. In both it furnishes data for reflection, in the definite sense of the data for the particular problem in hand, just as in the "problematic situation" of non-scientific experience. Again, it furnishes the means for testing the results of reflection. Data for philosophic inquiry are always data for *specific* problems; Dewey rejects the Lockian notion of data for "knowledge in general." Dewey's distinctive conception of immediate experience is best defined negatively; it is not a general starting point for all and any inquiry, as it is for Locke and for Whitehead. Nor is it treated, after the manner of Bradley, as somehow more "real" than reflective experience. It is one way of getting into contact with reality, but not the only way. On the other hand, for Dewey reflective experience is no more real than immediate. Reality comes to us in all kinds of experience; it enjoys special privileges in none.

Dewey raises no such issue as Locke's search for the ultimate simple ideas from which all other ideas have been derived. He holds that both science and philosophy start with problematic situations; when these are reflected upon, it becomes possible to specify and state the data involved. All inquiry is a process of criticizing the beliefs proposed as the answer to specified problematic situations.

This notion that all inquiry is a criticism of something specific within the context of a broader setting, is illustrated when Dewey considers the forms and methods of inquiry itself; and the fact that the broader setting appealed to is immediate experience is again made manifest. In the *Logic* inquiry is taken to be, basically, the "determination of an indeterminate situation."³ The book, he confesses, is "pragmatic," if "pragmatic" is properly interpreted as meaning the assertion of "the function of consequences as necessary tests of the validity of propositions provided these consequences are operationally instituted and are such as to resolve the *specific* problem evoking the operation."⁴ Dewey holds that "since every special case of knowledge is constituted as the outcome of some special inquiry, the conception of knowledge as such can only be a generalization of the properties discovered to belong to conclusions which are outcomes of inquiry. Knowledge, as an abstract term, is a name for the product of competent inquiries."⁵

In examining the forms and methods of inquiry, Dewey makes explicit what it means to say that immediate experience is a "datum" for philosophic inquiry, and that data function in such inquiry just as they function in scientific inquiry. This is clearly stated in the *Logic*. For Dewey, what is "given" in the strict sense of the word is a total field or situation. But "the given in the sense of the *singular* [Note: the "given" for a particular problem], whether object or quality, is the special aspect, phase or constituent of the existentially present situation that is selected to locate and identify its problematic features with reference to the inquiry then and there to be executed."⁶

Strictly speaking, this aspect is *taken* rather than given. Existential matter which is given or presented in a literal sense to judgment is denied. Dewey takes the position that the subject-matters of subject and predicate are determined in correspondence with each other in and by the process of thought, that is, by inquiry. As he states it, "the progress of science has destroyed the idea that objects as such are eternal substances."⁷

This raises the question of what it means to be a "substantial" object in any sense that will make it capable of serving as a subject. Dewey's answer involves explaining what he means by substantiality as a logical determination. Anything taken to be a subject must satisfy certain conditions of inquiry—and the fundamental condition is that "certain qualifications hang together as dependable signs that consequences will follow when certain inter-actions take place." Dewey goes on to say, "this is what is meant when it is said that substantiality is a logical determination."⁸

Thus we see that "the immediately given is an extensive qualitative situation, and that emergence of separate qualities is the result of operations of observation which discriminates elements to serve as means of providing tests for proposed solutions. In other words, they are functional distinctions made by inquiry within a total field for the sake of control of conclusions."⁹ Dewey goes on to say,

Existences are immediately given in experience; that is what experience primarily *is*. They are not given *to* experience but their givenness *is* experience. But such immediate qualitative experience is not itself cognitive; it fulfills none of the logical conditions of knowledge and of objects *qua* known. When inquiry occurs, these materials are given *to be known* . . . a tautological statement, since inquiry is the subjection of the given experience to operations of inquiry with the intent of institution of objects as known . . . inquiry always depends upon the immediate presence of directly (non-cognitively) experienced existential subject-matters.¹⁰

It seems evident that Dewey is *consciously* appealing to immediate experience as the setting within which thought functions, to locate in it specific factors which that thought can use; thought employs these factors to reconstruct that setting, which then becomes the basis for further inquiry and further refinement, involving further appeal to immediate experience. Dewey appeals to immediate experience in order to build further on it—to discover more structures within it. Immediate experience functions neither as a resting-place for thought to which it must return for its validation, nor as a necessary point of departure for all valid thinking. It is, first, a source of fresh material to be cognitively used, and secondly, a means of testing the success of that use. The immediate experience which is distinguished as "primary" or "gross" experience, as something lived and "had," is a matter

of use and enjoyment of the objects, activities, and products of the world; the *appeal* to immediate experience is an intermediate stage in a process of cognitive experience. It is in this context, then, that Dewey says,

Scientific subject-matter grows out of the direct problems and methods of common sense, and re-acts into common sense's practical uses and enjoyments in a way that enormously refines, expands and liberates the contents and the agencies at the disposal of common sense . . . When scientific subject-matter is seen to bear genetic and functional relation to the subject-matter of common sense controversial problems of epistemology and metaphysics disappear.¹¹

The thesis expounded in the *Logic*, that logical forms accrue to subject-matter when the latter is subjected to controlled inquiry, means that these forms are generated in the process of inquiry itself, or as Dewey says: "logical forms originate out of experiential material, and when constituted introduce new ways of operating with prior materials, which ways modify the material out of which they develop."¹² That is, the context of inquiry is again seen to be immediate experience. And this very inquiry also plays a part in determining situations.

Inquiry is the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is so determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations as to convert the elements of the original situation into a unified whole. It is the situation that is characterized by indeterminacy, we are doubtful because the situation is inherently doubtful. The indeterminate situation becomes problematic in the very process of being subjected to inquiry. There is nothing cognitive or intellectual in the existence of such situations, although they are the necessary conditions of cognitive operations and inquiry.¹³

When Dewey passes from logic to metaphysics he still retains the notion of inquiry as an appeal to the relevant contexts in which ideas proposed for the resolution of specific problems must function. Here the relevant context is most clearly set forth as meaning immediate experience. For when cognitive experience itself must be criticized, the context within which it performs a function is immediate experience.

It is interesting to note that the lack of specificity in the context within which it finds knowledge functioning is one of Dewey's chief charges against the idealistic appeal to immediate experience. He says,

Idealism fails to take into account the specified or concrete character of the uncertain situation in which thought occurs; it fails to note the empirically concrete nature of the subject-matter, acts, and tools by which determination and consistency are reached; it fails to note that the con-

clusive eventual objects having the latter properties are themselves as many as the situations dealt with.¹⁴

Dewey's metaphysics is concerned with "the generic traits of existence"; but in accord with this emphasis on the concrete situation, we find that this does not mean an attempt to enumerate the generic traits of being in general. It means calling attention to certain "generic traits" important to remember within specific contexts. We find that "thought goes beyond immediate existence to its relationships, the conditions which mediate it and the things to which it is in turn mediatory. And such a procedure is criticism . . . philosophy is inherently criticism, having its distinctive position among various modes of criticism in its generality, a criticism of criticism as it were."¹⁵ Obviously Dewey's notion of the critical function of philosophy has much in common with the views of Bradley and Whitehead.

We can see this criticism at work in Dewey's *Experience and Nature*, which aims to set forth and illustrate in metaphysical inquiry an empirical or denotative method that can do for philosophy "on a liberal scale what it does for special sciences on a technical scale." The appeal to immediate experience plays an essential part in Dewey's empirical method for philosophy. *Experience and Nature* aims to set forth just what such an empirical method is, what it does for the natural sciences, what Dewey thinks it can do for philosophy, and what rôle immediate experience plays in this method. An examination of Dewey's treatment of these questions will suggest, I think, that the precise meaning he attaches to the words "immediate experience" needs further clarification.

In *Experience and Nature* Dewey points out that associating these two words would seem to many "like talking of a round square," that many have thought that experience "forms a veil or screen which shuts us off from nature." But, he says, there is a context in which nature and experience get on harmoniously together—"wherein experience presents itself as the method, and the only method, of getting at nature." This is the context of the natural sciences, where an empirical method is used. Here, he continues, the very purport of empirical method is that things are to be studied on their own account, so as to find out what is revealed when they are experienced. Thus he concludes: "To discover some of these general features and to interpret their significance for a philosophic theory of the universe in which we live is the aim of this volume."¹⁶

If this is the rôle of empirical method in science, then we should expect to learn how these notions may be carried over into philosophic inquiry, and how immediate experience fits into such inquiry. In the first edition of *Experience and Nature* we find that: "the value of experience as method in philosophy is that it compels us to note that denotation comes first and last, so that to settle any discussion, to still any doubt, to answer any question, we

must go to some thing pointed to, denoted, and find our answer in that thing."¹⁷ This marks no preference for irrationality, "for one of the things pointed at, found and shown, is deduction, and the logic that governs it." And, "The empirical method points out when and where and how things of a designated description have been arrived at. It places before others a map of the road that has been travelled; they may . . . travel it . . . for themselves. The adoption of empirical method would procure for philosophic reflection something of that consensus which marks inquiry in the natural sciences."¹⁸

Returning to the second edition, we find Dewey distinguishing between "reflective" (refined, secondary) experience and "immediate" (gross, primary) experience. The rôle to be played by the latter in empirical method he states as follows: "the subject-matter of primary experience sets the problems and furnishes the first data of the reflection which constructs the secondary objects . . . ; it is also obvious that test and verification of the latter is secured only by return to things of crude or macroscopic experience—the sun, earth, plants and animals of common, every-day life."¹⁹ And where do the objects attained in reflection come in?

They *explain* the primary objects, they enable us to grasp them with *understanding*, instead of just having sense-contact with them. But how? Well, they define or lay out a path by which return to experienced things is of such a sort that the meaning, the significant content, of what is experienced gains an enriched and expanded force because of the path or method by which it was reached. Directly, in immediate contact it may be just what it was before—hard, colored, odorous, etc. But when the secondary objects, the refined objects, are employed as a method or road for coming at them, these qualities cease to be isolated details; they get the meaning contained in a whole system of related objects; they are rendered continuous with the rest of nature and take on the import of the things they are now seen to be continuous with.²⁰

These reflective objects, "when used to describe a path by which some goal in primary experience is designated or denoted . . . solve perplexities to which that crude material gives rise but which it cannot resolve of itself. They become means of control, of enlarged use and enjoyment of ordinary things."²¹

Gross, macroscopic subject-matters are "had" in primary experience, they are experienced as a result of a minimum of incidental reflection. The objects of this gross experience are the common-sense objects that set the problems for reflective experience, which can then refer back to it for testing. In short, knowledge enriches crude subject-matters. This is its function. And in this sense crude subject-matters give knowledge its import. In this

manner Dewey puts his basic notion of criticism to work; his metaphysics reveals an appeal from knowledge to something else, to "immediate experience," in criticism of cognition. Inquiry is placed within the broader setting in which it is carried on.

In terms of the Aristotelian analysis, Dewey might say that the material causes of experience are immediate qualities, whereas the formal causes are habits, beliefs, institutions, active functions. If Dewey seizes upon relations of events as the proper objects of knowledge, the consequent surrender of immediate qualities as objects of science nevertheless leaves these immediate objects just as they were, neither more nor less "real" than what is known; and certainly capable of being known. As Dewey says, "When it is denied that we are conscious of *events* as such it is not meant that we are not aware of *objects*. Objects are precisely what we are aware of. For objects are events with meanings."²²

Dewey emphasizes the fact that besides pointing to the contextual situation within which thinking occurs, ²³ a denotative method has a further critical function: insofar as reference to the primacy and ultimacy of immediate experience "provides a check or test for the conclusions of philosophic inquiry, it is a constant reminder that we must replace them, as secondary reflective products, in the experience out of which they arose, so that they may be confirmed or modified by the *new* order and clarity they introduce into it, and the *new* significantly experienced objects for which they furnish a method."²⁴

What is it that Dewey claims the denotative method will do for philosophy that non-empirical or non-denotative methods will not do? Well, "the charge that is brought against the non-empirical method is not that it depends upon theorizing, but that it fails to use refined objects as a path pointing and leading back to something in primary experience." Other typical failures of non-empirical philosophies are that they are not capable of verification, that there is no enlargement and enrichment of meanings for things of ordinary experience, and that the philosophic subject-matter, "not being employed to see what it leads to in ordinary experience and what new meanings it contributes, becomes aloof, abstract. Abstract, here, is used in the bad sense to designate something which exclusively occupies a realm of its own without contact with the things of ordinary experience."²⁵

Dewey points out that use of an empirical method avoids these difficulties. It also 1) protects us from creating artificial problems; 2) it provides a test for philosophic inquiry and its conclusions, while reminding us that we must replace these conclusions, as secondary reflective products, in the experience out of which they arise; 3) in showing us how philosophical results function in furthering experience, it reveals their empirical value, and prevents them from becoming mere museum pieces; 4) finally, it keeps us from identifying

objects of knowledge with the ultimate real objects. To treat all experience as a mode of knowing is the vice of intellectualism—things are “had” before they are known, and when all experience is taken as cognitive all else becomes appearance. Thus one of the most fundamental differences an empirical method makes is “in what is selected as original material” for inquiry. It is important whether you consider the fullness of experience or an abstraction from it; and when you make an abstraction, the problem is what consequences follow.

The empirical method, says Dewey, points both to what is “experienced” and to “experiencing,” for “experience” is a “double-barrelled” word, and contains both subject and object—there is no bias in favor of things in their capacity of being objects of knowledge. Non-empirical philosophies tend to separate subjects and objects, and exaggerate the features of known objects at the expense of the qualities of objects of enjoyment and trouble, friendship and human association, art, and industry. The assumption that all experience is a mode of knowing goes contrary to the facts. To isolate traits characteristic of objects known and then to define them as the sole ultimate realities accounts for the denial to nature of the characters which make things beautiful and ugly, lovable and contemptible. “It accounts for the belief that nature is an indifferent, dead mechanism; it explains why characteristics that are the valuable and valued traits of objects in actual experience are thought to create a fundamentally troublesome problem for philosophy.”²⁸ If such a selection is made, “honest empirical method will state when and where and why the act of selection took place, and thus enable others to repeat it and test its worth. . . . Choice that is avowed is an experiment to be tried on its merits and tested by its results.”

It is clear that Dewey holds to an empirical method which insists that refined methods and products be traced back to their origin in “primary experience” in all its heterogeneity and fullness; so that the needs and problems out of which they arise and which they have to satisfy are acknowledged, and the secondary methods and conclusions are brought back to the things of ordinary experience for verification.

We have seen that Dewey's problem is in general one of criticism of beliefs; in *Experience and Nature* in particular it is the formulating of a method that will treat experience in all its fullness. Furthermore, although we have not yet seen in detail just how, “immediate experience” is to play an important part in this critical method. This problem, of course, is raised in many other places in Dewey's works. For example, in the *Logic* the very chapter title, “The Existential Matrix of Inquiry,” emphasizes the continuity of inquiry with its full, natural, biological, and cultural setting—this setting is taken to be the necessary condition of any inquiry.

The same problem of avoiding any kind of “abstraction” is manifest in

Experience In Nature, where Dewey says thought and the object of thought are not finally independent of all connection with observed things. Experience includes both thought and observation, and the two cannot be taken in isolation in reality.

The objects of knowledge, when once attained, exercise the function of control over other materials. Hence the latter in so far depend for their status and value upon the object of knowledge . . . But this interpretation of dependence is strictly functional. Instead of first isolating the object of knowledge or judgment and then setting it up in its isolation as a measure of the reality of other things, it connects the scientific object, genetically and functionally, with other things without casting the invidious shadow of a lesser degree of reality upon the latter . . .²⁷

Elsewhere, on the same point, Dewey writes, "The subject-matter of . . . generalizations is distinctions that arise in and because of inquiry into the subject-matter of experience-nature, and they then function or operate as divisions of labor in the further control and ordering of its materials and processes."²⁸

The distinction between immediate and reflective experience is of old standing in Dewey's thought. In an essay written some thirty-seven years ago he argues that there may be things present in consciousness which are not present as knowledge, that we may have experience which has no element of mediation in it. Knowledge is a mediate affair and "knowing is knowing—a manipulation of things experienced in the light of another."²⁹ Here is a clear distinction between being and knowing, and to be a thing is clearly not the same as to be known as something; similarly, to be a feeling is one thing and to be known as a feeling another. In a recent essay Dewey has returned to this topic with great directness and has re-stated his old doctrine with new arguments.³⁰ In these "new" arguments he calls attention to the difference between "having" and "knowing" by means of the following illustration:

It is a verifiable fact that your *having* a toothache is quite a different event from *my* having it. It does not follow that you know that what you have is a toothache any differently from the way in which any one else knows it. As a matter of fact, the dentist probably knows the nature of toothache, the special location and other characteristics of *this* toothache, much better than does the one who *has* it . . . There are, in short, such things as enjoyments and sufferings which are private in occurrence. That they are known in any way different from the way in which we know sounds, colors, etc., seems to be a dictum resting upon an epistemological theory, not upon any evidence specifically relevant to the case.³¹

So we see that one of Dewey's fundamental problems, like Bradley's and Whitehead's, is the criticism of abstractions. For Dewey this is to be accomplished primarily by an empirical method in which the appeal to immediate experience plays an essential part. As an application of his empirical method, Dewey's criticism of abstractions always takes the form of criticism of specific abstractions, even when the problem considered is knowledge or inquiry; "immediate experience" is the context within which these abstractions are set. Unlike Bradley Dewey never asks, nor attempts to describe, what "immediate experience" may be in general; and unlike Whitehead Dewey never considers "immediate experience" as *the* data of further experience, but always as *furnishing* further data.

That Dewey has a rather confusing array of terms for "immediate experience" is apparent from the above. It seems to me that Dewey talks of at least three different kinds of "immediate experience," and that a clarification of the distinctions between them is necessary.

1. The immediate experience *out of which* knowledge arises.
2. The immediate experience *appealed to* in at least two distinct stages in knowing.
3. The immediate experience *to which* knowledge leads.

Let me expand the meanings of these distinctions before proceeding to a further analysis of Dewey's appeal.

1. The "immediate experience" out of which knowledge arises is what Dewey sometimes calls a "problematic situation." This is the "setting" within which thought functions to locate specific factors which it can use. Synonyms for this kind of immediate experience are "gross," "common sense," "primary," and "macroscopic" experience. This experience is never the start of knowledge in general, but always the start of a particular criticism or a particular reformulation. In this sense knowledge never "starts" but is always starting. Such "gross" or "primary" experience remains always the experience of an "accultured organism," an organism aware of itself as a social subject and agent, interacting with an environment composed of habits, beliefs, institutions—all the environmental factors. What I have designated as Dewey's "first" kind of immediate experience is thus "immediate" only with reference to its function in the particular inquiry that is starting there and then. It is immediate in being the immediate factor for this particular mediation in question; it is not immediate in the sense of being given for all and any inquiry.

Indicative of what I have called above Dewey's confusing array of terms is the fact that "gross," "primary," experience is sometimes spoken of as being one with "direct" experience. Yet the "immediate experience" talked of in this paragraph is actually distinguished from what is called "direct experience" in such works as the essay *The Objectivism-Subjectivism of Modern*

Philosophy, where direct experience is contrasted with "physical subject-matter," the latter being subject-matter as a condition of experience, the former being that subject-matter which grows out of a problem.³² This first kind of noncognitive immediate experience, then, is the setting within which thought functions to locate specific factors taken as the "data," or more accurately the "prehensa," for that particular inquiry.

2. The second kind of "immediate experience" is that which Dewey consciously appeals to as having cognitive use, which functions at two stages in the process of knowing. This appeal to immediate experience comes neither at the "beginning" nor the "end" of reflective experience, but occurs in between, at two stages in the process of reflective experience itself. The analysis of the immediate problematic situation to discover these relevant specific factors is the first point at which a reflective appeal to immediate experience enters. This first *appeal* selects materials for inquiry, relevant data for reflection.

Having thus secured its materials, reflective inquiry then uses these selected factors to construct its answer to the inquiry. At this second point it once more appeals to "immediate experience" to test or validate that answer. The first appeal locates materials and data, the second performs a critical function as a means for verifying the results of reflective experience. As Dewey says, "Reflective experience derives its materials from primary experience and refers to it for testing." But the "immediate experience" by means of which reflective experience is validated is the immediate experience you get to, not that from which you start; even the appeal to immediate experience to secure materials and data is not the starting-point, but an intermediate stage in inquiry.

This "forward" reference is expressed by Dewey in his illustration of a technically equipped expedition sent to observe an eclipse.³³ This illustration points to the fact that after the "setting" has been analyzed according to some hypothesis, we are *led* to secure observations (the second of our two appeals to immediate experience) which observations can then be appealed to to verify or deny whatever theory is in question. Another example of the same kind of appeal is as follows:

When the Michelson-Morley experiment disclosed, as a matter of gross experience, facts which did not agree with the results of accepted physical laws, physicists did not think for a moment of denying the validity of what was found in that experience, even though it rendered questionable an elaborate intellectual apparatus and system. The coincidence of the bands of the interferometer was accepted at its face value in spite of its incompatibility with Newtonian physics. Because scientific inquirers accepted it at its face value they at once set to work to reconstruct their theories . . . This task of re-adjustment compelled not only new reasonings

and calculations in the development of a more comprehensive theory, but opened up new ways of inquiry into experienced subject-matter.³⁴

This appeal to immediate experience at two stages of inquiry is not "immediate" in the sense of being unaffected by cognition, but is immediate *for that appeal*—it is an appeal to immediate experience which functions within a cognitive process.

3. The immediate experience *to which* knowledge leads Dewey calls "consummatory experience." When such consummation is achieved, the course of reflective experience has run in such a way that the immediate experience to which one gets is "final and fulfilling." As Dewey says, "Man is naturally more interested in consummations than he is in preparations," or, "Thought, intelligence, science is the intentional direction of natural events to meanings capable of immediate possession and enjoyment"; or, lastly, "To the empirical thinker, immediate enjoyment and suffering, are the conclusive evidence that nature has its finalities as well as its relationships."³⁵ To paraphrase one of Dewey's analogies, if our first kind of immediate experience is the beginning of a play, this third kind would be its climax. This immediate experience is of course distinguished from reflective experience, but this does not mean it has no cognitive traits. One can immediately experience the fruits of cognition. And it is perfectly possible to have non-cognitive experience of objects which are known, for example, in jumping from the path of an automobile.

As an illustration of these three kinds of immediate experience let us take the case of a shepherd who encounters a problematic situation when he notices that the familiar noises of his flock have ceased. With this awareness he may turn to the investigation of the conditions producing this unaccustomed silence. Here we have: 1) the shepherd's "problematic situation"; 2) the analysis and use of this situation as matter or material to be reflected and acted upon, and which leads to observation—a source for testing whether or not the problem is indeed genuinely grounded; 3) the felt consummation that might appear when the foreboding quiet was successfully accounted for.

As we have seen, in the first chapter of *Experience and Nature* Dewey is particularly concerned with showing the philosophic evils resulting from failure to use a denotative or empirical method in philosophic inquiry. This emphasis on denotation has led to misunderstandings of what Dewey means by "immediate experience" and by "data." I believe that his actual words bear out what I have already stated about the meanings of these concepts. In this chapter we find him saying that many philosophers, in their emphasis on the stable elements of experience, have neglected the facts of contingency and precariousness. These facts Dewey points out. But he is not saying, as many have thought, that mere denoting or pointing is knowl-

edge. "Immediate experience" may be appealed to in order to find factors left out of some other view of experience, or factors of experience which can be cognitively used; but what immediate experience gives is not knowledge, but matter or material which can then be reflectively elaborated and refined. This use of immediate experience in cognitive experience has a critical function in philosophic as well as in scientific inquiry, since, by means of the immediate experience we get to, beliefs which we entertain may be verified or tested.

We have distinguished three kinds of "immediate experience," all set off in contrast to reflective experience. The immediate experience to which Dewey can be said to "appeal" is differentiated from that out of which reflection "arises" by the fact that it is always a "post-reflective" experience. It always comes *after* some reflection, as an intermediate or middle stage in a cognitive process. This is true not only of scientific method; it holds also of that philosophic inquiry which seeks to criticize cognition itself, which is a criticism of cognition's method of criticism. The immediate experience which provides the "setting" within which thought occurs is contrasted with reflective experience in the first chapter of *Experience and Nature*. Dewey makes this distinction because to consider nothing but reflective experience would be to "follow the bias of the intellectualist in favour of his own specialized professional experience." Therefore he turns to "primary" experience to avoid the errors which come from construing experience as exclusively a knowledge-affair. It is, moreover, the subject-matter of primary experience (the "first" kind of immediate experience we distinguished) that "sets the problems and furnishes the first data of the reflection which constructs the secondary objects."⁸⁶

Now the phrase "first data" as used in this quotation clearly does not mean "generalized first data," in the sense of ultimate data for all and any inquiry, but data as data for a specific problem, whatever that specific problem may happen to be. In general the process of thought for Dewey seems to be from the results of a previous inquiry to immediate experience then back to reflective experience in order to get additional immediate experience. He is not trying to get back to some unknown object that might be presumed to underlie all experience. We do not find Dewey engaged in the sort of enterprise that W. R. Gondin⁸⁷ rightly condemns in so many inquiries into inquiry, namely, the attempt to anticipate what inquiry essentially reveals, prior to embarking upon it.

Dewey's constant reference to immediate experience and its common-sense objects keeps his philosophy out of that other-worldly atmosphere which has called down so much condemnation on philosophy. For Dewey neither science nor poetry sets up rival realms of antithetical existence; science as science is concerned with control of the objects of primary experi-

ence and poetry as poetry is concerned with these objects as ends to be enjoyed. When Dewey says that we "start" from immediate experience, that this is the "datum" for inquiry, the above sense of datum is indicated. To repeat, he is not looking for data in Locke's sense, i.e., taken as sense-impressions or simple ideas furnishing the originals for knowledge.

The sense in which "data" function in any scientific procedure is the sense in which "immediate experience" is a "datum" for Dewey. He has said too many times to be mistaken that experience cannot be reduced to materials of direct observation, to simple ideas, impressions, or sense-data. And, on the other hand, he has insisted that a condition of any experience is an "accultured organism" with all its habits and institutions. The term "accultured organism" designates the "subjective factor" in experience, i.e., that factor which is distinguished from "physical subject-matter" and which is "a singular organism, an organism that has been subjected to acculturation, and is aware of itself as a social subject and agent."³⁸

In attempting to avoid the vagaries of non-empirical philosophies Dewey sometimes uses the phrase "from where we start," but this must be taken within the context in which Dewey is writing. Time and again Dewey explicitly states that the "starting-point" for thinking is the actually problematic (which is always a specific problematic situation) and that thinking transforms confusion into illumination and consistency. Dewey's empirical method points to the contextual situation in which thinking occurs, and displays thinking as a continuous process of re-organization or re-construction within the world of experienced things.

As an example of this process of thinking we might use a physicist's or chemist's analysis of wood. Starting with the wood as known to possess all the properties and qualities with which he is familiarly dealing, he might analyze wood's structure into its cellulose elements; reflection on this might then possibly lead to the manufacture of paper, another object to be had and enjoyed. We thus start inquiry with the fruits of reflective experience. What is given in experience is subject-matter, and this can be reflectively grasped and used. You cannot start inquiry from the immediate experience to which you appeal during its course. What is "given" for inquiry is always reflective experience or the result of previous inquiry.

For Dewey the "data" of knowledge in this *temporal* sense are habits, institutions, and beliefs—all the result of previous inquiry and experience—not sensations. In his own words, "All knowing and effort to know starts from some belief, some received and asserted meaning which is a deposit of prior experience, personal and communal."³⁹ Sensation has no more to do with inquiry than any other mechanism involved in the functioning of the inquirer, say digestion. As in Aristotle, all learning begins with something you already know and the object of knowledge is how something is done,

better or worse. We can go to immediate experience to get material for reflective experience and in this sense to increase our knowledge, and we can go to immediate experience to make further distinctions within it; but immediate experience is never itself knowledge.

That knowledge is never immediate does not mean that knowledge cannot itself be immediately had and enjoyed, that it cannot be experienced non-cognitively. Within the same context it is clear that the conditions of experience can also be experienced as known. Knowledge is that which is achieved by an inquiry whose features conform to a determinate pattern. Knowledge deals with things as means. Inquiry into knowledge is not an attempt to reduce knowledge to nothing but sensations or its elements, it is an attempt to consider the factors involved in knowledge. To attempt to strip all reflection away from experience is a futile and fruitless enterprise. That is, immediate experience can be known only in terms of its conditions and consequences; it is not what is given, but it is revealed as we search for further contexts for the structures we already know.

Dewey expresses the relation between reflective and non-reflective experience in still another way which particularly emphasizes the importance of the concept of structure in his philosophy. He says, after once more stating that reflection and knowledge are concerned with objects as means, instrumentalities, that to know a thing as means is to know that thing's structure, for structure is the means whereby control is obtained. And here structure signifies

a fixed order of relations which serve as tools to effect immediate havings and beings. Goods, objects with qualities of fulfillment are the natural fruition of the discovery and employment of means, when the connection of ends with a sequential order is determined. Physical science . . . reveals the state or order upon which the occurrence of immediate and final qualities depends. It adds to casual having of ends an ability to regulate the date, place, and manner of their emergence.⁴⁰

It is then to the structure of things, their constant relationships, that we must look for the proper objects of knowledge.⁴¹

In contrast, then, to immediate things which come and go there are certain orders which are constant. There are in individually qualified things some qualities which are "pervasive," "common," "stable." And as Dewey says, these *non-temporal*, or logical, qualities are capable of abstraction and of conversion into relations, into temporal, numerical, and spatial order. As such they are dialectical, non-existential. But also as such they are tools, instrumentalities, applicable to historic events to help regulate their course. And this order is to be discovered by inquiry and confirmed by experimental action; as such it is the proper object of knowledge.

In a recent essay, *The Objectivism-Subjectivism of Modern Philosophy*, Dewey gives a clear statement of the difference between the things of direct and of reflective experience. He distinguishes the things of direct experience from "physical subject-matter" or the material of the physical sciences; although this does not mean that nothing but physical subject-matter is ever the subject of reflection. For the subject-matter that grows out of a problem is not the same as the subject-matter that is the condition of experience, and it is subject-matter in the latter sense that is Dewey's "physical material." In other words, "physical subject-matter" is the means to the activities, enjoyments, and sufferings which constitute direct experience. To control the latter, knowledge of the former is necessary. Knowledge of conditions is the "sole method of controlling the occurrence of specific events."⁴² And here "causal condition" includes efficient as well as formal and final causation: *how* things come to be as well as *what* things are and *why* they are so (in terms of the ends they serve).

Dewey goes on to say,

Physical subject-matter consists of the conditions of possible experiences in their status as possible. It does not account for any actual experience. It is general and remote. Objects of direct experience are singular and are here and now. The 'subjective' factor (using the word to designate the operations of an accultured organism) is, like 'objective' (physical subject-matter) a condition of experience. But it is *that* condition which is required to convert the conditions of kinds of objects, which as kinds represent generic possibilities into *this* object.⁴³

In other words an object is the coöperation of the two factors, an accultured organism and physical material. Direct or immediate experience then contains possible objects directly experienced as possibilities.

From the above the connection between "conditions" and "structure," and direct and reflective experience, is clear. For we have seen the proper object of knowledge to be the causes (antecedents) and functionings (consequents) of things. Scientific knowledge today is aimed at control, and in order to control the course of events it is indispensable to know their conditions; hence the importance of "structure," for "formal structure" is the condition, both as physical subject-matter and as accultured organism, and "functional structure" is the way these operate or coöperate (and in controlling events new ways of behaving are generated). Thus to say knowledge is concerned with things as means, as instrumentalities, is not adverse to appreciated ends but renders the latter more secure and more extensive.

We have seen that in the philosophies of Bradley and of Whitehead there is a drive to get back to immediate experience, to find there the "ultimate data" in which thought is rooted, and in terms of which its adequacy must

be tested. For Dewey, the appeal to immediate experience has instead a forward reference; the verification of thought that consists in its successful resolution of problematic situations involves an appeal to *fresh* or new immediate experience. Bradley starts his philosophy from an *already unified* whole of immediate experience, which thought destroys, and which must be somehow regained. Dewey starts inquiry rather from a specific problematic situation which *becomes unified* in inquiry or discourse, bringing its distinctive immediacy as its consummation rather than possessing it at the outset. That is, for Dewey immediacy, taken negatively as non-reflective experience, is broken down not by thought, but *before* thought, by the "problematic" situation. And, as negatively defined, immediate experience is always immediate *for* some particular inquiry. Thought, by its mediation, restores immediacy, but in a "heightened" sense—as a "consummation," not a mere conclusion, or a mere "having."

Thus Dewey agrees with both Bradley and Whitehead that knowledge arises out of immediate experience, that immediate experience furnishes the subject-matter for thought, and that the "ultimate appeal" is to immediate experience. He agrees with Bradley, against Whitehead, that immediate experience is non-cognitive;⁴⁴ it does not give knowledge of anything. But Dewey disagrees with both in holding that the immediate experience which is appealed to must be specific. It is neither Bradley's "undifferentiated whole" nor Whitehead's "whole occurrence of nature." Furthermore, when Dewey says that the "ultimate appeal" is to immediate experience, he is using "ultimate" in a temporal sense, as the ultimate stage in the process of verifying the results of inquiry. And for him immediate experience is "ultimate" in another and different sense; it is the *outcome* of reflective experience. Dewey expresses this by saying that immediate experience is both primary and ultimate—"primary as it is given in an uncontrolled form, ultimate as it is given in a more regulated and significant form; a form made possible by the methods and results of reflective experience."⁴⁵

We have seen that while Dewey distinguishes three kinds of immediate experience, his *appeal* is to that immediate experience which thought uses in reconstructing problematic situations. This reconstructed situation can then become the basis for further inquiry, involving further *appeal* to "new" or "fresh" immediate experience. Let me offer one final example of this process, arranged in a series of stages and numbered to bring out the point as clearly as possible:

1. A problem arises, say, in connection with observing the sun (this is the immediate experience *out of which* knowledge may arise.)
2. The situation is analyzed to discover its relevant factors (this is the first *appeal* to immediate experience).

3. A hypothesis is constructed on the basis of previous inquiry, and of these selected factors.
4. The hypothesis is tested by referring it to a new immediate experience, say, pointer readings (this is the second *appeal* to immediate experience) which then can be used to
5. Further refine and elaborate the hypothesis—and in the light of this we get a
6. New or fresh immediate experience (this is the consummatory experience). And this process is capable of indefinite expansion.

It is obvious that immediate experience when taken as an intermediate stage in a process of cognitive experience has a critical function. And it is equally clear that it is this "fresh" immediate experience to which we get, and not the immediate experience from which we start, that verifies reflective experience. But it is this latter or initial kind of immediate experience that furnishes the context within which thought functions, and defines thought's particular setting; it is this setting which is reconstructed by thought and thereby provides a new basis for further reflection and refinement. And it is this interaction or process which makes for the cumulative advance of science and philosophy.

It is important to note that whenever we do consciously turn from the structures elaborated in reflection to what is immediately encountered we find that we always emerge with new structures reflectively distinguished, and never with merely more immediate experience. Thus we first immediately "have" or experience the color blue; next, through inquiry certain structures are revealed, say, the physicist's wave lengths. Then we can return to immediate experience as refined by reflection to find more structures. Thus the physicist, in turning to immediate experience, goes to it to discover further structures within it, not to get back to where he started from. Between Whitehead and Dewey the difference on this point seems to lie between abstracting from and building on immediate experience. Whitehead's physicist cannot get away from the immediate experience he starts with, whereas Dewey's gets to new immediate experience by building on that from which he starts.

In conclusion we can note that Dewey is fully conscious of how his appeal to immediate experience operates, and of the definite rôle it has to play as part of an empirical method which will enrich experience as a progressive and cumulative affair. With proper distinctions drawn between the various kinds of immediate experience, we can grasp and use the notion that criticism and inquiry develop within a coöperative process which progresses indefinitely from immediate experience to reflective experience to new immediate experience and to more reflective experience.

Conclusion

We have seen that originally both "rationalists" like Descartes and "empiricists" like Locke appealed to immediate experience as a resting-place in the quest for some privileged "given," a "given" undistorted by thought. In this quest, the "immediate experience" appealed to, whether it turned out to be "sense-data," "simple ideas," "intuition," or some other factor, functioned to provide a primary source and basis for all further reflective experience or knowledge. It was taken to be the brute or "hard datum" from which all inquiry could be constructed or derived; it also served to verify thought, in that no thought would be considered valid except as it could be shown to be "grounded" in and derived from what is immediately given.

Bradley, Whitehead, and Dewey are all aware of the long search for a privileged "given" and are critical of those quests which end in such "simple elements." They all agree that the functions of an appeal to immediate experience are: 1) to provide a "setting" out of which knowledge arises; 2) to furnish subject-matter for thought; 3) to provide a way of verifying and criticizing thought.

But these agreements turn out on closer inspection to be in many respects merely nominal. The immediate experience which is a "setting" for thought is taken by Dewey to be a specific "problematic situation," by Bradley to be an "undifferentiated whole of feeling," by Whitehead to be "the whole occurrence of nature" or a "concrescence of prehensions" of that whole occurrence. Similarly, the "ultimate" subject-matter which immediate experience provides is "ultimate" for Dewey only in the sense of being ultimate for some particular problem, "ultimate" in the temporal sense of an ultimate stage in the process of verifying the results of inquiry. And immediate experience is also "ultimate" for him in another sense, as the non-cognitive outcome or eventuation of reflective experience. For Bradley and Whitehead immediate experience is "ultimate" in a more general sense as distinguished from this specific sense. For them, "ultimate" means that certain general data of immediate experience are ultimate for any kind of knowledge or for knowledge in general, in contrast to the data selected for a particular purpose in a specific situation. And for Whitehead, at least, these ultimate data are construed as being just there as "hard data," data stripped of all interpretation, which our minds can simply record. The immediate experience by which thought is verified is for Dewey the immediate experience you get to as an intermediate stage in a cognitive process; for Bradley

and Whitehead it is the immediate experience from which you start and to which you must get back.

Bradley's immediate experience, his "undifferentiated whole of feeling," is a unity which thought destroys¹—and this unity must somehow be regained in order that thought may find its "resting place" in an experience undistorted by thought. Bradley, clearly enough, thinks he is appealing to immediate experience to account for that in experience which is more than thought, to provide a setting for thought, and to get into a direct contact with Reality undistorted by reflective experience. To be sure, this does not prevent him from actually appealing to immediate experience to criticize specific problems; and some of his most acute analyses are the fruit of such detailed criticism. But as a result of his urge to know everything, to know the world in its totality, and to verify all thought by means of the criterion of coherence, which for him means that nothing must be left out which would leave thought incomplete, he confuses the distinction between "having" and "knowing" in experience, and ends by trying, in *Appearance and Reality* to get an experience in which "thought has . . . to become one thing with sense and feeling," and by attempting to find out what immediate experience is before thought has destroyed it—since this immediate experience will, he thinks, give him a direct contact with Reality. For Bradley the demand of thought is for self-consistency and all-inclusiveness; and truth "is identical with Reality in the sense that, in order to perfect itself, it would have to become Reality."² To be "real" is to include all experience, and this, of course, must include immediate experience; to determine the "degree of reality" of any thought, you must appeal to immediate experience—since without it as a factor any thought is a "prey to contradiction."

Whitehead has concerned himself with immediate experience on at least the two levels I have mentioned, in his philosophy of nature and his philosophy of organism. In the former this concern is manifested in a search for the "ultimate data" of experience, in the latter by an appeal to immediate experience as part of his enterprise of criticizing abstractions and of finding more factors in experience to be used as material for reflective experience. But in this appeal he differs from both Bradley and Dewey, in that he makes immediate experience cognitive—and cognitive experience immediate—by construing knowledge as a kind of complicated "awareness"; it is this awareness that gives knowledge. In a sense this commits him to the view he expresses when he says that "the scientific concepts of space and time are the first outcomes of the simplest generalizations from experience"; it commits him to holding, at least in his early writings, to the view that if you merely look at nature you will see that everything is connected, i.e., you will see a systematic connectedness like that maintained by what has come to be called a field theory in physics.

What he says seems to make scientific theory capable of "abstraction" from immediate experience, even though he never suggests that this is the way scientific theories actually arise. That is, he talks as if mathematical physics could and should be logically derived from the "extensive structure" which he finds at one pole of actual occasions, although he never contends that it has in its development been so derived. He searches for "the ultimate data of science" and the "ultimate data of perceptual knowledge" as the logical postulates from which all knowledge can be derived, but he accepts science as a going concern while this search goes on. In terms of this avowed end there seems to arise the dilemma that either these "ultimate data" add nothing to the validity of science, or else they subtract from science by criticizing those factors in its structure which science does assume but which it ought not to assume, if it must be deducible wholly from them. It is the first-mentioned horn of the dilemma that causes difficulty for Whitehead. That is, Whitehead is trying to construe immediate experience in terms which would show how you can get science out of it,³ and which imply that you go to immediate experience to make sure that there are in the "ultimate data" it furnishes to science whatever that science demands.

Whitehead proceeds as a mathematician trying to deduce knowledge from the postulates found in immediate experience, even though at the same time he is actually employing immediate experience as a criterion for testing the validity of knowledge and as a source for more material for reflection. If philosophy is a critique of abstractions, it must not be forgotten that this critique can be profitably carried on only in terms of an appeal to other *relevant* and *selected* factors of experience—as Whitehead does do—and not in terms of general "ultimate data," as he says he is doing. In accordance with what he says Whitehead agrees with Bradley in taking immediate experience as a "resting-place" for thought, as something you must get back to rather than as a point of departure for making new distinctions within subject-matter. And his "ultimate appeal" for thought is naïve immediate experience. In both Whitehead and Bradley there is no explicit reference to the function of immediate experience as leading to further reflective and immediate experience.

In Dewey's philosophy the appeal to immediate experience has its place as a phase of empirical method. And even if Dewey does not seem to have worked out a thoroughly consistent terminology for his several kinds of immediate experience, he does recognize differentiations in such a way as to make explicit the critical function of immediate experience involved in what I have called the appeal to the "second kind." And the appeal to immediate experience is explicitly found as an intermediate stage in a cognitive process. Dewey's appeal to immediate experience is to get more material, more matter, for reflective experience—to find more structures

within it, and to verify it. This kind of immediate experience to which he appeals, both in scientific and in philosophic method, is to be built upon; it is not an undifferentiated whole from which elements are to be abstracted and which then must be somehow got back to. This forward reference of immediate experience provides, in a development out of the immediate experience appealed to for materials of reflection, for the verification of assertions; it is the immediate experience you get to, not that from which you start. And as part of a critical philosophic method immediate experience always functions for Dewey as a means to the criticism of specific problems, by the placing of particular problems in broader contexts wherein the context is the fullness of immediate experience itself.

In conclusion, then, it would seem as though our investigation of immediate experience, considered negatively, throws considerable doubt on the validity of any enterprise which attempts to find out what immediate experience in general, and in some privileged ultimate sense, is like; that is, what immediate experience is before thought has disrupted it, stripped of all interpretation. Considered as an attempt to find out what immediate experience is before thought has disrupted it, Bradley's enterprise is of questionable value. Whitehead's enterprise, insofar as it involves the search for an ultimate "given," or for "hard data," stripped of all cognitive elements, is equally suspicious. When Dewey's writings suggest a search similar to Bradley's, they too become questionable.

To go to non-reflective experience in general, or to seek immediate experience in general, is to become bound up in problems which seem to have no relation to any particular critical enterprise—and we are reminded again of the fact that a "critique of abstractions" is always a critique of some specific intellectual abstraction in a system of abstractions, not a critique of abstractness. It is clear that each of the three men considered has his own distinctive problems; but it is also clear that Bradley's problem of getting immediate experience back into thought is a problem only if you assume that thought destroys immediate experience. And Whitehead's problem of grounding scientific views in immediate experience is a problem only if you assume the necessity of basing scientific views in some supposedly "given" hard data. The strongest evidence, perhaps, that these are dubious problems is that Bradley and Whitehead get away from them as their philosophies develop and actually transform their initial problems into genuine problems of philosophic criticism, wherein "immediate experience" plays a rôle in the critique of specific, rather than general, abstractions. The notion of the necessary specificity of any appeal to immediate experience points to a conclusion about the quest for a "resting-place" for thought: thought never does find a final resting-place in Reality, but is always carried on to new

problems—there is no complete rest for thought except in the sense in which consummatory experience is “final.”

Considered positively, it would seem that Bradley, Whitehead, and Dewey are all in fact actually appealing to immediate experience in a process of philosophic inquiry, as a selected factor (or factors) found in a wider experience which men have and which might be called the manifold normal experience of an accultured human organism. This wider experience involves, among others, such factors as the results of previous inquiry, habits, customs, institutions, observations, perceptions. The function of such an appeal is to secure fresh material for reflection, and to serve as a means of criticizing the results of earlier inquiry. That these three men do not always so interpret their appeal to immediate experience is, perhaps, the result of assumptions which, in the end, do not detract from the usefulness of the appeal.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. Randall and Buchler, *Philosophy, an Introduction*, p. 185.
2. Woodbridge, *Nature and Mind*, p. 164.
3. Santayana, *Scepticism and Animal Faith*, p. 1. What Santayana means by the middle of things is as follows: "Perhaps there is no source of things at all, no simpler form from which they are evolved, but only an endless succession of different complexities. In that case nothing would be lost by joining the procession wherever one happens to come upon it . . . [there is] a current presumption or experience to the effect that in some directions at least things do grow out of simpler things; bread can be baked, and dough and fire and an oven are conjoined in baking it. Such an episode is enough to establish the notion of origins and explanations, without at all implying that the dough and the hot oven are themselves primary facts. A philosopher may accordingly perfectly well undertake to find *episodes of evolution* in the world: parents with children, storms with shipwrecks, passions with tragedies. If he begins in the middle he will still begin at the beginning of something, and perhaps as much at the beginning of things as he could possibly begin."
4. For a more detailed statement on *archai* turn to page 33.
5. Plato, *Theaetetus*, section 176.
6. Descriptive generalizations are contrasted with "a priori generalities" in Dewey's essay, "Whitehead's Philosophy," *Philosophical Review*, XLVI, 170.

BRADLEY'S APPEAL TO IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE

1. James Mill, *Analysis of the Human Mind*, p. 134.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 234 ff.
3. John S. Mill, *A System of Logic*, (Harper & Brother, 1850), pp. 11-12.
4. *Ibid.*, see page 39.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
11. An example of this type of thought in modern times is Viscount Haldane's statement that "to be and to be *for* mind as the subject to which experience presents itself, do not seem to be ideas that are truly distinguishable . . . It is legitimate to connect the existence of experience with its being for knowledge as its foundation." (from *Human Experience*, pp. 8-9). Com-

menting on this, M. C. Otto says, for Haldane "experience develops out of mind not the opposite, for the source of all being is mind. And mind is an activity which, because of the logically different forms it contains, gives rise to individual selves and a world of varying aspects, each of which is relatively true, none of which is final. Behind this diversity all minds are somehow one." (*Journal of Philosophy*, 1927, p. 81.)

12. T. H. Green, *Prolegomena To Ethics*, p. 23.

13. F. J. E. Woodbridge, *Realm of Mind*, pp. 37 ff.

14. T. H. Green, *Prolegomena To Ethics*, pp. 37 ff.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 48; also, see page 53, where Green says: "sensitive life . . . has no place in nature, except as determined by relations which can exist only for a thinking consciousness."

16. Dewey, *The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy*, p. 112.

17. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press 1897), p. 554.

18. Bradley, *Principles of Logic*, p. 533.

19. T. M. Forsyth, *English Philosophy*, p. 156.

20. Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1914), p. 31.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 210 ff.

22. See below, p. 15, for elucidation of "resting-place."

23. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1897), p. 105.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 569.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 555.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 478.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

29. See pages 19-23.

30. *Appearance and Reality*, p. 165.

31. *Essays* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press), p. 161.

32. *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 136-137.

33. *Appearance and Reality*, p. 76 (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press).

34. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 139.

37. R. Kagey, *F. H. Bradley's Logic*, pp. 50-51.

38. Bradley, *Essays* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1914), pp. 202-203.

39. Kagey, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

41. Bradley, *Essays* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1914), p. 177.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

43. *Appearance and Reality* (2nd ed., Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1897), pp. 321-322.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
47. R. W. Church, *Bradley's Dialectic*, p. 25 (my italics).
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 182-184.
49. *Ibid.*, pp. 157-160.
50. *Appearance and Reality*, p. 75.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
55. *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 146.
57. R. W. Church, *op. cit.*, see page 73.
58. *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 224-225.
59. *Ibid.*, pp. 251-253.
60. *Essays*, pp. 194-195 (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1914).
61. *Appearance and Reality* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1892). p. 23.
62. Church, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
63. *Essays*, (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1914), p. 237
64. *Ibid.*, p. 239.
65. *Appearance and Reality* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1897), p. 142.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 371.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 383 (my italics).
69. *Ibid.*, p. 547.
70. J. H. Muirhead, "Bradley's Place in Philosophy," *Mind* Vol. 34 (1925), p. 180.
71. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1897), p. 538.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 542.
73. *Ibid.*, pp. 175-176.
74. T. M. Forsyth, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-159.
75. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1897), p. 181.
76. Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1914), p. 178. (For another expression on this topic see Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 225, 460, and 488.)

WHITEHEAD'S APPEAL TO IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE

1. Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature*, p. 5.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
4. In the same work Whitehead says: "There are three components in our knowledge of nature, namely, fact, factors, and entities. Fact is the undifferentiated terminus of sense-awareness; factors are termini of sense-awareness differentiated as elements of fact; entities are factors in their function as termini of thought." *Ibid.*, p. 13.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 49 *et seq.* (my italics).
7. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
8. *Principles of Natural Knowledge*, pp. VI-VII.
9. *The Concept of Nature*, p. 40 (my italics).
10. *Ibid.*, p. 170 (my italics).
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-29.
12. In *Science and the Modern World* Whitehead says: "The ultimate appeal is to naïve experience." (pp. 129-130).
13. An interesting comment of George Santayana is to the effect that Whitehead would disown some of the distressing consequences of some traditional principle in order to be free "to cling to it with a happier mind . . . Here the traditional principle was that of Berkeley, that the objects of knowledge are inert ideas, or the immediate data of experience, and the distressing consequence was that in that case nothing latent or dynamic could exist in nature or could be made an object of study . . . Might not this consequence be denied, while maintaining that principle, if we alleged that things are in reality compacted of ideas, of 'objects' immediately given in experience but existing independently of knowledge? All would then be reality and nothing appearance, yet nothing would exist otherwise than just as it appeared." (*The Realm of Essence*, pp. 169-170.)
14. *The Concept of Nature*, p. 55 and 70.
15. Whitehead's latest statement on the subject of value occurs in the essay *Mathematics and the Good*. Taking account of this essay, John Goheen offers the following illuminating analysis of the notion of value. He says, "Pattern, whether simple or complex, imposes limitation on existence, and with the limited event value emerges. It is in this sense that Whitehead interprets mathematics as yielding some of the most general patterns which may or do qualify events. As realized in natural occurrences mathematical relations confer value. An event has value because it has a finite structure. . . . Pattern and activity, the most general ontological conditions, are at the same time the sufficient and necessary conditions of value." (*Whitehead's Theory of Value*, Schilpp vol., pp. 437-9). But since ultimately value is the character of feeling which is experienced under a certain pattern of activity, "the real burden of Whitehead's conception of value must be borne by his analysis of the event as a unit of feeling." Goheen goes on to say that Whitehead's conception of value is itself identical with feeling and that two dimensions of this feeling are suggested: first, the organism's feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction; and, second, the degree of intensity of this experience. I take it that the implication is that feelings are essentially instances of awareness of relations, and value is there in events to be perceived.
16. *Symbolism*, p. 7.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 49-51.
19. *Process and Reality*, p. 96.
20. *Modes of Thought*, p. 209, (my italics).

21. *Ibid.*, p. 217 (italics mine). The conclusion of this quotation is: "For philosophy, the one fundamental fact is that the whole complexity of mental experience is either derived or modified by such functioning. Also our basic feeling is this sense of derivation, which leads to our claim for unity, of body and mind . . . But our immediate experience also claims derivation from another source. This second source is our own state of mind directly preceding the immediate present of our conscious experience . . . Thus our experience in the present discloses its own nature as with two sources of derivation, namely, the body and the antecedent experiential functioning." For some of the consequences of this notion of our sense of conformation to the past, see above, page 40.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 205-213 (italics mine).

23. *Adventures of Ideas*, pp. 227-228. I cite Locke in illustration of what is meant by the most certain knowledge being a kind of seeing or immediate awareness. Considering what 'solidity' is he says, "If anyone asks me what this solidity is, I send him to his senses to inform him."

A relevant comment on this is Woodbridge's, to the effect that, "Solidity turns out to be more than something at the tips of our fingers; it turns out to be something characteristic of the system of things in which our fingers move."

24. In referring to the mind as a "spectator" there should be kept in view what happened to the notion of mind in the empiricist tradition—especially that assumption whereby real knowledge deals only with observed particulars, not with reasons why, and is considered as perceptual or direct knowledge. Mind, in knowing, is passive in the sense that something happens to it; it is a spectator, a great eye contemplating the world through sense-experience. And the test for the validity of knowledge is to refer back to its origin in sense-experience. As Woodbridge says, this is to fail to recognize that in knowledge a different authority rules than the porter who let us in.

25. See above, pp. 45 *et seq.*

26. *Science and the Modern World*, p. 102.

27. *Principles of Natural Knowledge*, p. 80.

28. *Process and Reality*, p. 37.

29. *Process and Reality*, p. 335 (my italics).

30. *Ibid.*, p. 288.

31. As Whitehead says: "the basic fact is the rise of an effective tone originating from things whose relevance is given." (*Adventures of Ideas*, p. 226.) That is, the basis of experience is emotional. For a similar statement see *Process and Reality*, pp. 244-248.

32. *Process and Reality*, p. 407.

33. In developing and deriving the notion of reflective experience Whitehead says all higher feelings are "comparative feelings," (i.e., their data are contrasts), and so far as reflective experience is concerned it is treated for the most part as one kind of comparative feeling, namely, "intellectual feeling." An intellectual feeling is the integration of a propositional feeling with the physical feeling from which it is partially derived and a proposi-

tional feeling is a feeling whose objective datum is a proposition. A proposition is an eternal object understood in reference to certain actual entities which are its logical subject. There are two kind of intellectual feelings. Here we are concerned with that kind called conscious perception. The above and the quotation are from R. Das, *The Philosophy of Whitehead*, pp. 119-121.

34. *Process and Reality*, p. 395.

35. This is one meaning of truth in Whitehead's system. Another seems to be that truth which is immediately resultant from the direct knowledge given in the mode of causal efficacy.

36. Some quotations in which Whitehead so talks are:

- a) "There is direct knowledge of the antecedent functioning of the body in sense-perception." *Process and Reality*, p. 125.
 - b) "We have direct knowledge of the relationships of our central intelligence to our bodily feelings." *Ibid.*, p. 182.
 - c) "Our only avenue of direct knowledge" . . . (In reference to presentational immediacy—*Ibid.*, p. 187.)
 - d) "Descartes asserts one principle which is the basis of all philosophy; he holds that the whole of knowledge is based on the immediate operation of knowing." *Ibid.*, p. 219.
 - e) "If we turn to the perceptive mode of presentational immediacy, the regions perceived by direct and indirect knowledge respectively are inverted in comparison with the other mode." *Ibid.*, p. 256.
 - f) "If the meaning of the world be an event, then either that event is directly known or vaguely known." *Ibid.*, p. 276.
 - g) "What he directly knows" . . . *Principles of Natural Knowledge*, p. 13.
 - h) "The immediate knowledge of the individual percipient is entirely his perceptual awareness." *Ibid.*, p. 79.
 - i) "Any concept of all nature as immediately known is always a concept of some duration." *Concept of Nature*, p. 56.
 - j) "The knowledge provided by pure presentational immediacy." *Symbolism*, p. 123.
37. See *Mathematics and the Good* (Schilpp vol.), pp. 678 *et seq.*
 38. *Process and Reality*, p. 244.
 39. *Ibid.*, pp. 246-8.
 40. *Ibid.*, p. 338.
 41. *Ibid.*, pp. 367-8.
 42. *Ibid.*, pp. 443-444.
 43. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
 44. *Ibid.*, p. 366.
 45. *Ibid.*, p. 423.
 46. *Ibid.*, p. 353.
 47. *Ibid.*, p. 356.
 48. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
 49. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
 50. *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 179.
 51. *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 182.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
55. *Ibid.*, pp. 192-193.
56. Mason Gross, *Journal of Philosophy*, XL, No. 10 (1943), 275-276.

DEWEY'S APPEAL TO IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE

1. Dewey, "Philosophy," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, p. 120.
2. *Experience and Nature*, 2nd. ed., p. 2a.
3. *Logic*, p. III.
4. *Ibid.*, p. IV (my italics).
5. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 124 (my italics).
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 127ff. In an earlier work this denial that objects as such are eternal substances is stated in the following manner: "From the standpoint of enjoyment a thing is what it directly does for us. From that of labor a thing is what it will do to other things. But in every event there is something obdurate, self-sufficient, wholly immediate, neither a relation nor an element in a relational whole, but terminal and exclusive . . . Objects are actually esthetic when they turn hazard and defeat to an issue which is above and beyond trouble and vicissitude . . . The doctrine that objects as ends are the proper objects of science, because they are the ultimate forms of real being, met its doom in the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century. Empirically, the existence of objects of direct grasp, possession, use and enjoyment cannot be denied. Any quality as such is final; it is at once initial and terminal; just what it is as it exists. It may be referred to other things, it may be treated as an effect or as a sign." (*Experience and Nature*, pp. 84ff.) Of course this does not mean that immediacy and efficacy are disjoined existentially.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 127ff.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 516ff.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 520ff.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 101ff.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114.
14. *Experience and Nature*, p. 68.
15. *Ibid.*, 2nd. ed., pp. 397-398.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
17. *Experience and Nature*, 1st. ed., p. 10.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
19. *Experience and Nature*, 2nd. ed., p. 4.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 318.
23. The following comment of H. W. Schneider is of interest in this con-

nection: Dewey's "willingness to take the particular qualities and primary forms of experience at their face value, this willingness to operate in a universe which tolerates intelligence . . . makes philosophy one with the fine arts. It sacrifices certainty and precision to practical skill and empirical relevance." (*The Prospect for Empirical Philosophy*, in *John Dewey—The Man and His Philosophy*, p. 119.)

24. *Experience and Nature*, 2nd. ed., p. 18.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

27. *Experience In Nature*, pp. 256-257.

28. "Whitehead's Philosophy," *Philosophical Review*, XLVI, 175.

29. "The Experimental Theory of Knowledge," (in the volume *The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy*), 80.

30. The essay referred to is "How is Mind To Be Known," *Journal of Philosophy*, XXXIX, No. 2 (Jan. 15, 1942).

The view Dewey is arguing against may serve to illuminate his position. This view is as follows: "It was the accepted postulate of ancient and medieval knowledge that *certainty* is an essential property of anything entitled to be called knowledge in its full sense, so that inferred or discursive conclusions depend for their status as knowledge on being derived by inherently necessary true procedures from premises that are immediately and self-evidently known to be true . . . The epistemological doctrine lying back of belief in immediate and certain knowledge of the mental is that in the case of the mental *to be and to be known* are one and the same thing . . . In the case of the mental, so it is assumed, the objects or events to be known are self-revealing, self-disclosing. To have them is to know them."

31. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

32. See below, p. 66.

33. "A technically equipped expedition is sent to South Africa so that by means of experiencing a thing—an eclipse—in primary experience, *observations* can be secured to compare with, and test the theory implied in the calculated result." (*Experience and Nature*, p. 4, my italics.)

34. *Experience and Nature*, pp. 35-36.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

H. W. Schneider, in talking of Dewey's philosophy, makes clear what is meant by consummatory experience when he says: "Its [Dewey's philosophy] intellectual anatomy is familiar to us all; and to many of us, whose nourishment it has been, it is almost too intimate to be known; it is immediately enjoyed and suffered." (*Op. cit.*, p. 108).

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

37. W. R. Gondin, *Preface to Inquiry*, p. 6.

38. Dewey, "The Objectivism-Subjectivism of Modern Philosophy," *Journal of Philosophy*, XXXVIII, No. 20 (September 25, 1941), p. 541.

39. *Experience and Nature*, p. 428.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

41. What this constancy means is expressed as follows: "To follow the

clues of experience is to see that the so-called sensible world is a world of immediate beginnings and endings; not at all an affair of cases of knowledge but a succession of qualitative events; while the so-called conceptual order is recognised to be the proper object of science, since it constitutes the scheme of constant relationships by means of which spare, scattered and casual events are bound together into connected history." (*Ibid.*, p. 140.)

42. "The Objectivism-Subjectivism of Modern Philosophy," *Journal of Philosophy*, XXXVIII, 538.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 541.

44. In reference to the non-cognitive status of immediate experience Dewey writes: "Immediate experience is not itself cognitive; it fulfills none of the logical conditions of knowledge and of objects qua known." (*Logic*, p. 520.)

45. *Experience and Nature*, p. 15.

CONCLUSION

1. As Bradley says: "we start . . . from the immediate union of one and many, or sameness and difference, which we have given to us in feeling and in the inherence of qualities in a sensuous whole. This immediate union is of necessity dissolved in our judgment, and it never in any judgment is completely made good." (*Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 256.)

2. *Ibid.*, p. 343.

3. Whitehead's own words are: "The discussion of the deduction of scientific concepts from the simplest elements of our perceptual knowledge at once brings us to philosophical theory." (*Principles of Natural Knowledge*, p. VII.)

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